

---

This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google<sup>TM</sup> books

<https://books.google.com>





---

---

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

---

---

From the John A. Flory  
Collection of Cinema  
Literature





TO

**One whose pride in the author  
stirred his inspiration into  
making this book  
what it is.**



## APPRECIATION

**The author expresses his thanks to Captain Leslie T. Peacocke, Wm. L. Wright, Ben. P. Schulberg, Russell E. Smith, Elizabeth R. Carpenter and Wm. E. Wing, for courtesies extended in the preparation of this work**





# How To Write a Photoplay

BY

A. W. THOMAS

**President Photoplaywrights' Association of America, Editor  
Photoplay Magazine, Editor Photoplay Scenario, Author  
of Photoplay Helps and Hints and the Photoplay  
"Punch;" Member of the Photoplay Authors'  
League, Screen and Ed-Au Clubs.**

---

PUBLISHED BY  
**THE PHOTOPLAYWRIGHTS' ASS'N OF AMERICA**  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

SV  
PN194L  
T5  
C2

**Copyright, 1914, in United States and Great Britain, by**  
**A. W. THOMAS**  
**(All Rights Reserved.)**

## CONTENTS

<b>CONTRIBUTED PREFACE.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CHAPTER I—KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITY..</b>	<b>17</b>
SOME FAULTS IN WRITING	
DEVELOPING STORY WRITERS	
SCENARIOS VS. FICTION	
THE ABILITY AND IDEAS	
ORIGINALITY THE STANDARD	
MASTERING THE SCIENCE	
<b>CHAPTER II—PLOT-ACTION AND INDIVID-</b>	
<b>UALITY .....</b>	<b>25</b>
BUILDING THE STORY	
CONSULTING AUTHORITY	
GAINING KNOWLEDGE	
IMAGINATION A BIG ASSET	
<b>CHAPTER III—WHAT IS A PHOTOPLAY?..</b>	<b>31</b>
STORY WITH INTEREST	
WEAVING IN INTEREST	
THE HEART TOUCH	
THE AUTHOR'S PART	
<b>CHAPTER IV—THE PHOTOPLAY ACTION..</b>	<b>36</b>
DEVELOPING THE ACTION	
WHAT IS ACTION?	
REAL EMOTION STIRS	
STRENGTHENING THE ACTION	
CREATING SYMPATHY	
<b>CHAPTER V—PREPARING THE STORY....</b>	<b>42</b>
PERFECT STORIES PLEASE	
DIVIDING THE SCENES	
FOLLOWING A METHOD	

<b>CHAPTER VI—THE ART OF CONDENSATION</b>	<b>47</b>
THE SCENARIO DEFINED	
TIME IS LIMITED	
CONDENSATION ILLUSTRATED	
IMPORTANCE OF BREVITY	
EVOLVING A PLOT	
VALUE OF CONDENSATION	
<b>CHAPTER VII—THE UNAVAILABLE STORY.</b>	<b>55</b>
COMPARISON OF STORIES	
“MABEL’S MARRIAGE”	
“AN INTERRUPTED HONEYMOON”—“MA- BEL’S MARRIAGE” REWRITTEN	
COMPARISON SYNOPSSES	
AMATEURS’ INCONSISTENCIES	
<b>CHAPTER VIII—CONSTRUCTION.....</b>	<b>73</b>
IMPROVING THE STORY	
HIDING THE CLIMAX	
LEAVING THE IMPRESSION	
AVOIDING ENTANGLEMENTS	
BY-PLAY GROWTH	
MOTIVE OF THE STORY	
<b>CHAPTER IX—THE DRAMATIC PLOT STORY</b>	<b>80</b>
MODELING THE DRAMATIC	
EFFECTIVE DRAMATIC ELEMENTS	
THE “VITAL SPOT” STORY	
THE ONE-REEL DRAMATIC STORY	
RELIEVING THE TENSION	
GETTING IN THE “PUNCH”	
A DIFFERENT TYPE OF DRAMA	
<b>CHAPTER X—THE PLOTLESS STORY.....</b>	<b>99</b>
PLAYS WITHOUT PLOTS	
GOOD TECHNIQUE, BUT—	
<b>CHAPTER XI—PRODUCTS OF OBSERVATION.</b>	<b>107</b>
VALUE OF OBSERVATION	
FINDING A PLOT-GERM	
STUDYING BY OBSERVATION	
THE INSTIGATOR OF IDEAS	
OBSERVATION A FACULTY	

<b>CHAPTER XII—THE POWER OF CHARACTERS .....</b>	<b>113</b>
COMBINING CHARACTERISTICS	
COMMONPLACE CHARACTERS	
SHAKESPEARE'S CHARACTERS	
UNNECESSARY CHARACTERS	
ACTION BEFITTING CHARACTERS	
THE LEADING CHARACTERS	
<b>CHAPTER XIII—THE WRITING OF COMEDY .....</b>	<b>119</b>
THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN COMEDIES	
THE SPLIT-REEL COMEDY	
VARIETIES OF COMEDY	
DIALOGUE IN STORIES	
SITUATIONS IN COMEDY	
THE FARCE COMEDY	
<b>CHAPTER XIV—THE PHOTOPLAY CLIMAX</b>	<b>134</b>
THE DOMINANT PRINCIPLE	
INVENTING NEW OBSTACLES	
UTILIZING EFFECTIVE POINTS	
SENSATIONAL PLAYS	
CURRENTS OF SIMILARITY	
UNWINDING THE PLOT	
WHERE TO END A STORY	
<b>CHAPTER XV—KNOWING YOUR CHARACTERS .....</b>	<b>142</b>
EYE PICTURIZATION	
SEEING THE MENTAL PICTURE	
BUILDING UP CHARACTER	
MAKING SHARP CONTRASTS	
FUNCTION OF CHARACTERS	
BECOMING TOO CONVENTIONAL	
ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER	
THE DEFINED PURPOSE	
<b>CHAPTER XVI—THE MULTIPLE REEL... </b>	<b>151</b>
CRISES IN MULTIPLE REELS	
THE TRIANGULAR SITUATION	
THRILLS OF MELODRAMA	
THREE-REEL INDIAN STORY	
DEFINING MULTIPLE REELS	
REALISM IN ADJUSTMENT	
A TWO-PART DRAMA	

<b>CHAPTER XVII—THE POWER OF THE</b>	
<b>STORY .....</b>	<b>190</b>
THE POWER OF INTEREST	
STORY CHARACTERIZATION	
STORY SYMBOLISM	
DRAMATIC AND EPIC ANGLES	
<b>CHAPTER XVIII—THE CURIOSITY OF A</b>	
<b>STORY .....</b>	<b>196</b>
THRILL AND THRILLERS	
THE STRONGEST APPEAL	
HANDLING THE SUBJECT	
TOUCHING TO TEARS	
INCREASING THE INTEREST	
THE FINISHING TOUCH	
<b>CHAPTER XIX—TIMING THE STORY.....</b>	<b>203</b>
AN EXAMPLE OF TIME	
THE SLOW ACTION	
WHAT TIME MEANS	
HOW TO TIME ACTION	
ACTION AND THE EYE	
JUDGMENT IN ACTION	
<b>CHAPTER XX—APPLYING THE TECHNIQUE</b>	<b>210</b>
CONSIDER STORY FIRST	
TITLING THE STORY	
WHAT DEVELOPMENT MEANS	
THE PROPER TERMS	
<b>CHAPTER XXI—THE RETURNED STORY..</b>	<b>216</b>
RECOGNIZING CAPABLE WRITERS	
PATIENCE AND EXPERIENCE	
CAUSE OF MANY FAILURES	
<b>CHAPTER XXII—VISIONS, DISSOLVES AND</b>	
<b>MASKS .....</b>	<b>221</b>
PLACING FADES ILLOGICALLY	
PROPER USE OF FADES	
USING THE MASK	

<b>CHAPTER XXIII—PHOTOPLAY SCENE-</b>	
<b>Plots .....</b>	<b>226</b>
<b>PROPER SCENE-PLOTS</b>	
<b>A SCENE-PLOT EXAMPLE</b>	
<b>NUMBERING SETS USED</b>	
<b>CHAPTER XXIV—THE QUESTION OF</b>	
<b>ADAPTATIONS .....</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>ADAPTATIONS IN STUDIOS</b>	
<b>AMATEURS SHOULD HESITATE</b>	
<b>SCENARIOIZING BOOK STORIES</b>	
<b>METHODS OF ADAPTING</b>	
<b>A FOUR-PART ADAPTATION</b>	
<b>THE ONE-PART ADAPTATION</b>	
<b>CHAPTER XXV—GETTING THE EDITOR'S</b>	
<b>EYE .....</b>	<b>275</b>
<b>SUBMITTING A STORY</b>	
<b>HOW TO SEND A STORY</b>	
<b>AN ATTRACTIVE SCRIPT</b>	
<b>CHAPTER XXVI—STUDIO HONESTY.....</b>	<b>280</b>
<b>SIMILARITY OF STORIES</b>	
<b>PLAYS FROM NEWS ITEMS</b>	
<b>FALSE SUSPICION</b>	
<b>ACCUSING THE EDITORS</b>	
<b>EDITORS PLAY NO FAVORITES</b>	
<b>CHAPTER XXVII—MARKETING THE STORY</b>	<b>285</b>
<b>KEEPING TRACK OF IDEAS</b>	
<b>SOME CAUSES OF REJECTION</b>	
<b>THE STUDIO EDITOR'S ABILITY</b>	
<b>PLOTS AND GRAMMAR</b>	
<b>WHAT NOT TO DO</b>	
<b>THE COPYRIGHT PRIVILEGE</b>	
<b>KEEPING DOWN THE COST</b>	
<b>CO-OPERATE WITH OTHERS</b>	
<b>CHAPTER XXVIII—CENSORSHIP.....</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>COVERING CRIME SITUATIONS</b>	
<b>THE MORALS OF STORIES</b>	
<b>PERMISSIBLE STORIES</b>	



<b>CHAPTER XXIX—TRAINING THE MIND</b>	
<b>To Plot.....</b>	<b>297</b>
STANDARDS OF SUCCESS	
CONDITIONS OF WRITING	
CREATING A WEAK PLOT	
STRENGTHENING THE PLOT	
THE PLOT AT ITS HEIGHT	
DENOUEMENT IN THE PLOT	
<b>CHAPTER XXX—A TALK WITH THE</b>	
<b>READER .....</b>	<b>304</b>
PLOTS ABOUND EVERYWHERE	
BLENDING THE COLORS	
THE MAKING OF AN AUTHOR	
KEEP EVERLASTINGLY AT IT	
IDEAS RESULT IN PLOTS	
WRITE ONLY THE BEST	
A FASCINATING WORK	
WATCHING YOUR PICTURE-STORY	
MONEY IN SCENARIO WRITING	
PLOT IS WHAT COUNTS	
<b>CHAPTER XXXI—TECHNICAL STUDIO</b>	
<b>TERMS .....</b>	<b>315</b>
DEFINITIONS, USES, ETC., ETC.	
<b>CHAPTER XXXII—QUESTIONS AND AN-....</b>	
<b>SWERS .....</b>	<b>321</b>
SYNOPSIS—SCENES—MISCELLANEOUS	

## CONTRIBUTED PREFACE

*To write the preface to a book such as this is a privilege to be exceeded only by the honor of writing the book itself. It is unnecessary to say that the present volume is the best text-book on the writing of the photoplay ever published, for after a perusal of the following pages that statement would appear altogether superfluous, but the writer wishes very much indeed to confide to you that Mr. A. W. Thomas has, through the medium of this book, accomplished two unique achievements—he has written the complex truth and logic of the scenario, so that the amateur photoplaywright can understand and embrace them; and he has been faithful to himself and his readers. He has religiously and consistently avoided exaggeration—the glaring fault in most similar works—and yet he has not omitted a single item either of direct benefit or remote value to the prospective or present student of the photoplay.*

*For all those struggling in the dark of misconception and confusion toward the hidden light of photoplay perfection, Mr. Thomas has illuminated the way with the brilliance of his profound reflections and the firm conclusions of long years of study and mastery of his subject. It is not difficult to perceive the psychic truth underlying all his statements, an unconscious force born only of sincerity in and devotion to his labors. The writer is happy to state that he is familiar with Mr. Thomas' own work and continuous, untiring efforts to*

*aid every struggling writer who sought or would accept his assistance; and that spirit of service permeates every page of this book.*

*In including a chapter, which he calls "A Talk with the Reader," its author presents a feature as valuable, in itself, as most other volumes devoted to the scenario in their entirety.*

*To Mr. A. W. Thomas, the loyal, sincere and conscientious friend of all students of the motion picture technique, the undersigned, as a photoplaywright and scenario editor, extends his earnest thanks for this uplifting and instructive book, and to all its readers the expectant hope that they may profit as much as he did by it.*

B. P. SCHULBERG.

New York City, Oct. 6, 1914.

## INTRODUCTION.

**T**HE marked increase in photoplay production naturally leads to a fast-developing interest in photoplay writing. There are two reasons for the interest manifest in photoplay or scenario writing. First, the demand of the producers, and second, the desire of amateur writers and authors to train their thoughts in developing picture-play plots, where a new field has been created to which such writers are invited because of the fact that it differs from the legitimate dramatic in that education and the art of literary construction are, to an extent, unnecessary. And ninety-five per cent, of this class of writers have been unsuccessful, and, mainly, because of the lack of proper instruction in the art of picture-plot building, which consists of, first, the idea, second, sufficient interest and crisis, third, the climax, and fourth, the applying of technique. But the aspiring writer and author has had to do the best he could with this new composition, depending, largely, on trade papers and hints of editors; depending on his or her own ability to master the subject of photoplay writing; neither have there been instructors or staff writers willing to leave their lucrative studio desks to teach amateurs by correspondence.

The proper instruction or the proper technique and information procured from reliable sources, a good book or otherwise, coupled with experience and advice of one capable of judging, editing, criticizing and advising, will, if the writer possess the requisite imagination and ability to create, lead to success. But if the writer lacks ideas, imagination, visualization and power of plot building, then, I should say, all the books and instruction one can procure would be of no value. Latent talent can be developed, improved, and to a degree, polished, but beyond that no absent course can be of value to a point where an honest guarantee of perfection or even a warrant for indicating that an aspiring author's work would be accepted by the present-day critical manuscript readers, editors and directors of the moving-picture studios can be given.

A prolific source of failure in scenario writing, I think, grows out of the writers' inability to distinguish *what is plot and what is not*. They fail to analyze their efforts to learn whether for photoplay use their plots contain sufficient action, suspense, heart-interest, logic, crisis, anti-climax and climax, to prove available at the studio. So, in the mastering of all these requirements, one must not expect to learn too quickly. As the analysis of thought and feeling aids the singer, just so will analysis help the scenario writer. Monotone is a legitimate feature of expression in speaking; so *action is the expression* of the photoplay, be-

cause action takes the place of words. Photoplay writing is nothing more than the art of story-telling by action rather than by expression of words, and its relation to moving-picture audiences is shown only by the appreciative dramatic action woven into the picture-story, appealing to the intelligence and sympathies of theater mystery. Emotionalism, fascinating mystery, interesting suspense, characterization, surprise, well-sustained sequence, logical conclusion and natural climax can all be written into a photoplay just as easily as in the legitimate—all of them necessary.

Constructive knowledge can be attained. But it means study. Whether it is following the advice of an editor and critic or writing as laid down in a book of technique, it takes study. There is no new plan or method of photoplay instruction in technical construction; to attempt to apply a new way would be like putting a new cover on an old book.

Patterning after Aristotle, I shall endeavor to point out the best way of writing, developing and constructing moving-picture scenarios, suggesting and classifying successful forms rather than to lay down any one specific rule, except as it applies to the logical point of construction. Aristotle was more of an analyst than he was a dogmatist; he did more to classify than to serve from the Attic dramatists. He said: "You had better," rather than "you must." So I shall not say you must conform to this man's scenario or to that writ-

er's idea of construction, but I shall say "you had better." And it is only by following a fundamentally correct method that success will come. It is one thing to instruct a writer not to do this or that, but it is quite a different matter to tell one just *how to do it*, when it applies to the embryonic stage or introductory part of photoplay writing. And it is with the idea in mind that students and writers should have a treatise, fully understandable, plain and concise, yet technically correct, that this book is written.

Failure of new writers to submit available picture plays, is, in a measure, responsible for this treatise, and while it may appear complex to some, one should remember that drama itself is complex. The conditions of a successful photoplay *rest entirely with the author*, so far as the writer's imagination, visualization and plot are concerned; but on the other hand, before the scenario is submitted to the editor and director, technique *should be* mastered.

Notice, I do not say *must be*, but *should be*. A beginner may inquire why. It is because if the idea or plot-germ is new, novel, interesting, the editor and director will revamp and produce the story, injecting what it lacks through the inability of the author to do so because of his lack of technique; the editor and director develop and strengthen the play, making it an understandable screen production. In other words, the writer's *idea* was purchased, *not* the finished story or plot as outlined by the author.

So here, again, is where a book or treatise is needed—to show the writer that, while his idea was good and sold, had it been technically correct the purchase price would have been larger, because less time of editor and director would have been consumed.

The wordless drama—the photoplay—is worthy of more than passing comment and recognition by the writer who aims to become a successful photoplaywright. An appeal to the emotion and imagination must be made by the author, and the *truth and interest driven home by suggestion*. Incidents in the lives of a husband and wife, involving no complex or interesting situation, and in which the range of material action is so limited as to make impossible a forceful, connected plot, are of no value, aside from being used or interwoven in a story that can be made into a film production with sufficient dramatic incentive to make it salable. But new writers are unable to see the difference between plain, everyday incidents and a well-connected plot or necessary sequence. New writers do not understand the proper division of scenes and the value of theme, neither do they consistently develop their stories, which accounts for the large percentage of unavailable manuscripts received by the film makers. Here, again, I say and urge *study*.

The pantomime of the Augustan Age and the photoplay of to-day have a connection that has been cemented by the work of the Augustan



writers and the art and science and dramatic ability of the producers of modern photoplay making. From the pantomime elements found in the early Italian *commediu dell' arte*, when in many French theaters the word "pantomime" was applied to mythological spectacles, to the production of "The Tavern Bilkers" in Drury Lane in 1702, down to Harlequin's players and to the art and work of the Greek dramatist, Aeschylus; the Italian, Gozzi; the German, Hauptmann; the English, Shakespeare; of our own American, Belasco, comes the relationship of the pantomime of centuries ago and the highly-developed moving pictures of the twentieth century, many of the scenarios for them having been written by authors unknown to the legitimate stage—*new writers with new ideas*, writers coming from almost every vocation of life. For the art of scenario writing need not be entirely placed in the hands of dramatic writers of fame. The standard of American-produced moving pictures is raised by the writers and authors, new or old, who write gripping, but wholesome dramas; powerful, touching, directly-appealing, inspiring and suggestive of truth and good—plays without words—nothing but gestures, action, emotion, plot, logic and art—art with improvement in proportion to that made by Augustan writers centuries ago.

Emphasis is placed upon the various suggestions and rules laid down in the following pages, and they should not be carelessly read,

if the reader desires to attain success. Practice and study apply to the art of scenario writing, for it is an art, the same as to the learning of story-writing. It should be plainly understood that it is the intention and desire of the author to instruct in the construction of the photoplay, for while one may be capable of narrating in conversation or story-telling, he may still be unable perfectly to portray human interest in photoplay form.

The author had the same things to contend with as do the new writers of to-day. Close study and application to the requirements of the studios, coupled with experience and the power of imagination, overcame the handicap of an amateur, and the result, experience and success of the author have been so written in this treatise as to cover every phase of the photoplay-writing field.

No book, however, can invent the idea, and, therefore, the aim of this treatise is to enable the writer to see the necessity of creating a relation between the formation of the play and the idea. *The general idea or plot germ must be technically connected with the specific thought or desired effect*, or one cannot gain success in writing picture plays. The cry of the poet: "Give me a great thought that I may live on it," may be reduced to a commercial application in the adaption of one's self to the writing of marketable scenarios.

In conclusion, this book is not written on a hypothesis, but on the correct standards of

forms, covering the field for which it is intended—photoplay production. And it is prepared for the new writer and the old, and submitted on the strength of the author's own success and in the spirit with which I can only hope it will be received, having in mind the desire to lessen the burden of the studio editors who are compelled to read thousands of impossible photoplay manuscripts, and to be of benefit to the amateur and new writers who are unable, through the lack of idea and technical knowledge, to write anything but unavailable picture-play stories; to increase the selling ability of those whom I style "near writers," and in all to be of service to photoplay-writing authors in general.

A. W. THOMAS.

## CHAPTER I.

### KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITY.

**A** PHOTOPLAY story, or scenario, bears the same relationship to the moving picture studio as the fiction story does to the magazine editor's office. Perhaps sixty per cent of the people have the ability for originating an interesting story as it may apply to magazine work, but they lack the technical skill necessary in literary construction to make the article acceptable to the editor and publisher. The better part of thousands of manuscripts returned yearly by the magazine editor, accompanied by the simple "unavailable" note, are rejected by the publishers not alone for the absence of originality, but also for the lack of original construction. There are times, however, when the magazine editor may see a striking idea in a poorly handled story, and this idea may be turned over to someone who can reconstruct it, and the originator of the story is simply paid for the idea alone.

The inexperienced story writer pays little attention to definiteness, possibility and logic. Manuscripts are less likely to be considered earnestly because of impracticable features, inferior style and preparation. But besides

this there are few writers, indeed, who correctly determine just what feature of literary nature to take up. Some, who are more capable of writing humorous stories, attempt the dramatic, and so it goes. The same thing applies to photoplay writing, and to preserve the originality of the vision and to strengthen the knowledge of the ordinary writer, it is absolutely necessary that these necessary requirements be gained through experience, for, as the old saying is, "Experience is the best teacher."

*Some Faults in Writing.*

Referring again to the magazine editor, when one's manuscript is returned month after month by the various publishers the editor's little note of regret does not enlighten the author as to the faults of the story; it does not even intimate that there are any faults; and the writer, plodding along in his or her bewilderment, wondering why the effort is not appreciated, again sends the manuscript to another publisher, and still another, until it really becomes ragged. Occasionally, of course, a story "gets over," but so many more times it continues to dwell in "Rejectment Row." Magazine editors have no time to advise the aspiring author where in a story is at fault, and the writer, struggling to obtain a name among the literary stars, is likely to give up in despair and abandon writing as a means of livelihood, or

even as a side-line compensation. And yet but comparatively few ever learn that failure is due in many instances to such faults in manuscript preparation as redundancy, incoherence, impropriety, pretension, ambiguity, tautology, solecism, euphony, figure and a score of minor imperfections. The acquiring of the necessary *knowledge* to enable an author properly to prepare a story for presentation can be gained only by sufficient schooling or by close communion with an editor or writer who will take the time and pains to point out the faults of diction and put the author in the right groove.

### *Developing Story Writers.*

It is greatly in the way one begins. It costs years of decidedly close application to the rules of grammar and consistent study of the requirements of story writing to master it. The treatment of local topics in essay form, while strengthening the power of couching words in fitting manner, and giving room for the proper display of action, is not the style required in fiction or narrative creation.

The field of the film producer was not created to entice the unsuccessful and inexperienced fiction writers, but rather to develop this class of writers where they, even with their lack of grammatical construction, could turn their ideas into salable photoplays. Of

course, the invitation was extended to successful short-story writers as well. The field created a place wherein those who possess the faculty of putting their observations into action, who have talent along narrative-creating lines, and who, perhaps, while they are not qualified for story writing through the lack of proper grammatical training, can put their ideas into photoplay actions instead of words, and, in a large measure, create for themselves as large a revenue by writing picture plays as does a literary genius, whose name is considered sufficient when attached to a manuscript, to warrant its acceptance as a worthy piece of fiction.

### *Scenarios vs. Fiction.*

And yet there are failures in the photoplay-writing business—many of them; and these failures are not confined to illogical and inexperienced scenario writers, or even to those who fail in fiction writing. Some of the best-known story writers of the country have failed completely at scenario work; others have had such small success that they gave up the work and devoted their time purely to fiction writing. Fiction has proved a ready seller with many writers, but their scripts for photoplay production have been rejected.

Photoplay writing really does bring hope to the disheartened, aspiring author. Not

that one can convert every returned "un-available" story into an acceptable scenario, but because in photoplay conception and construction the author who is unable to make a gem of his story as a magazine article can, with the proper thought and system, *knowledge* and *ability* of the work—and providing, of course, the story has real merit, plot, suspense and action—transform it into an admirably good moving picture play. Whether it becomes an acceptable one not only depends on its plot and action, but somewhat also on its appearance, construction, expression and plainness of plot, and its adaptability to the requirements of the producer and of the people who frequent moving picture theaters.

### *The Ability and Ideas.*

*Knowledge* and *ability* acquired in the mastering of photoplay technique are not sufficient to make a successful photoplaywright. *Knowledge* of technique and *ability* to construct will not create ideas, and without the idea around which the technique is woven, a story for photoplay purposes would be worthless. Probably the most apparent weakness seen by studio editors in the work of new writers is the lack of originality, even though the story be prepared and written out in perfect scenario form, showing that the writer has not only mastered technique, but also has the *ability* to construct. On the other hand,



sometimes ideas are submitted which, while meritorious in a way, show evidence of having been written hurriedly; and plots written hurriedly are, as a rule, genuinely inferior in make-up, lack the proper construction and necessary technique to make them self-explanatory and salable. There are times, perhaps, when a writer may think out, write and complete a scenario in a couple of hours' time, but ordinarily the price received for such an effort is the minimum. Even when the imagination has been vivid enough to bring forth an acceptable idea, the writer must have the *knowledge* and *ability* to explain, in scenario form, the unfolding of the plot, as it is expected that the author can construe his own conception and idea better than the most able editor may be able to conceive, but in so doing, the writer must be careful in his introduction, building up and unfolding of the story. As the idea might be applied to dramatic productions, suspense is necessary to the success of the story. And the true strength of this kind of material in a play can only be sustained and made proper by the constant study of those plays in which it is to be used, and not all scenario writers, even though they have much *ability*, are able to sustain and connect suspense through a series of scenes. Only experience will bring it.

*Originality the Standard.*

As magazine publishers pay more attention to manuscripts grammatically constructed around the idea which immediately shows its originality, so the film producers will pay more money for scenarios in which originality is incorporated with much care as to the technical construction. A few original ideas jotted down now and then, and written out as a series of incidents or episodes rather than in the form of a connected plot, either with or without the properly-applied technique, is not what the producers want, and there again *knowledge* and *ability* are required. And with these two elements, the author should arrange and rearrange the plot, the technique, the unfolding of the story and the climax, so that the play as a whole will be immediately grasped by the editor and director as one worth while. It pays to write slowly and surely, instead of hurriedly and haphazardly, for in the former case one is sure to create a better impression and turn out better work than in the latter. The experienced writer knows this, and the same rule that applies to writing an acceptable magazine story also applies to the salable scenario. Therefore, photoplay technical *knowledge* should be acquired, and the *ability* coupled with it, both to be determined by the merits of the story turned out through the combining of these things, which, in connection with

originality, are the things that make successful photoplaywrights.

*Mastering the Science.*

Before a writer can become a successful moving picture playwright he must, of course, not only understand thoroughly the procedure and art, but the requirements of the producer. When one masters the science or technique of photoplay writing, systematically putting the ideas and actions into their proper channels, following out the desires of the director or producer, the author must not imagine that is all. Far from it. The worthwhile, new, unique and appealing, something-different plot or idea is the cornerstone of scenario success, the real feature of a salable picture play. One may be gifted with sufficient talent to readily grasp the technique required, but unless the idea accompanies the work, the effort is worthless to the editor and director. So there are two things to be considered in starting out to become a photoplaywright—*knowledge* and *ability*.

## CHAPTER II.

### PLOT-ACTION AND INDIVIDUALITY.

**T**HERE is a great difference between story-writing and scenario writing. Plots, or rather the way of describing or depicting them, differ materially. What may be easily comprehended in fiction may be unrecognizable on the screen. The scenario should be self-explanatory as to intent, logical and consistent; full of action, not metaphors. A convincing style must be acquired; the spectators before whom the picture-play is to be exhibited must be made to clearly understand the plot and action of characters, intelligently prepared to readily grasp each situation and the climax as the story nears its finale. Plot-action does not mean merely incidents and co-incidents in the lives of the "eternal triangle." It goes beyond that—into the dramatic thought and sequence of situation and suspension, weaving, as it develops, a logical theme-story around the essential *dramatis personae* of the play at the same time interesting the auxiliary characters to an understandable degree of importance.

#### *Building a Story.*

The scenario is the keystone of the photo-play. But it must be as firmly and correctly

built as the arch of a mason. The fundamental foundation of a photoplay scenario must be a comprehensive one. Not necessarily an elaborate arrangement of terms, scenes and scene-plots, but a concise statement of material and dramatic action that will enable editor and director to combine their knowledge and art, the scenario as the keystone uniting them, the filmed picture being the result. The technical form required in writing photoplay scenarios is not a hard one to master; rather the form is easier because in many cases the writer applies technique, but overlooks originality of action. Thousands of aspiring writers possess a wonderfully keen and observing mind and imagination, but they are woefully destitute of the power of building, arranging and visualizing their thought-plots into strong virile dramatic picture plays. Grammatical construction does not help such writers. Then what do they need to know to put their observation and plots into photoplay action, easily interpreted, effective and yet condensed as required?

*Consulting Authority.*

Books never give advice unless consulted.

Talent may be developed in solitude, and it may be acquired in an environment of ecstasy. And the talent as applied to successful photoplay writing must be measured in proportion to the degree of learning which the author can absorb; it is only by the close application to

the fundamental studio rule that the writer can learn why his work is not effective, why his manuscripts are returned. May be one writer's scenarios are returned because of impracticable features, another's on account of illogical situations, a third because of imperfect development and still a fourth entirely due to lack of sufficient heart-interest and action. As books never give advice unless consulted, neither are mistakes corrected unless the author learns how to eliminate the faults and build and develop properly. It is simply the polishing of the talent.

But the return of a manuscript may not mean it is rejected because of inferiority, lack of plot or that its return in any way lessens its value. But do you, author, know this? Do you know that it *has* value or are you aware that it has *no* value? If you, author, don't know, who should? The question is already answered in *your* mind—you should know. *But do you?* The studio editor cannot take time to tell you whether your scenario has merit, neither can he instruct you how to make it salable, even though it possess plot. This *you* should know, and *there is a way of your obtaining the knowledge.*

### *Gaining Knowledge.*

Each author's success depends upon his own individuality. One may possess personality, another initiative; one may be a close observer

and another be expert in expression, but the combined talents are necessary, and what one lacks and another has, both may possess. In attaining success, as development comes, an author will absorb the meaning of characterization, symbolism, by-play, crisis, suspense, complication, mystery, condensation, tension, sequence, catastrophe, time, obstacle, analysis, unity, plot, action, anti-climax and climax—all necessary, all easy to acquire. If the desire to learn and acquire is in harmony with ambition and inspiration, let aspiration precede and there can be no stopping of progress. Knowledge is learned and practice teaches development. The attitude of the mind to master photoplay technique, create plot, develop action, improve and succeed is governed by the author's earnestness, but neither superior manuscript preparation nor correct construction will make available scenarios without their being cemented together with a plausible story, full of new, live, novel action—plays with vim and go and punch.

*Imagination a Big Asset.*

To all other requirements an author ought to possess, should be added one of vital importance—imagination. In scenario writing more than in fiction work, imagination is to be developed and regulated. But in using the imagination, creating the ideas out of which shall grow the play, a study of psychology should

be made, for it will strengthen the mind in the performance of its activities. Next to memory, imagination is a wonderful thing. It plays with fairies and forms pleasant visions; it paints vivid pictures of incidents and suggests the plot-germs of drama and comedy. And imagination, with visualization, points out to the writer the beginning and ending of his story.

In becoming successful photoplaywrights, authors must consult and accept the authority of technique, and if the writer is adept, conscientious and will follow the advice of authority, there is no logical reason why unavailable manuscripts should not cease; and if the writers will not assume to have learned too quickly or to write a complete scenario before actually acquiring the things necessary to acquire; if they will delve into the dramatic principles involved and get to a point where *they know* when the plot is strong enough to submit, then they will have consulted the book frequently enough to gain that knowledge which will only come to the author and writer who determines his success by his individuality and power to build the plot-action and kind of plays the American film producer is demanding.

How to judge a scenario, how to know when it is right and how to know, from a critic's standpoint, when it is not ready for submission, and how to make it salable—which means presenting old ideas in new ways or inventing new



situations in interesting action—is what you, writer and reader, should know—*must* know.

Less time should be spent on this chapter than those following, which *show you how to originate, develop and succeed.*

## CHAPTER III.

### WHAT IS A PHOTOPLAY?

THE advent into the moving picture writing business of those who have become successful in a short time has caused many to believe that a photoplay was simply a singular, interesting incident or series of incidents, personal experiences, a chase, an error or errors of some unfortunate, an accident, or perhaps an item of minor interest clipped from the morning newspaper, but such is not the case. The photoplay of today *must* be charmingly interesting, it *must* be a story of merit; it *must* be something new and decidedly different, fascinating, and with sufficient suspense, interest, and dramatic action to place it in the class where a real photoplay should be placed—in line with the work of the legitimate stage. Of course, it is readily known that there are many inferior photoplays, just as there have been bad productions in the legitimate. There will always be overdone comedy and underdone drama. There will always be comedy without humorous interest; there will always be drama without sufficient of that which goes to make real drama. But that is not the question. A photoplay is the simple recording, devising, divisioning and cementing together of circumstances and situations surrounding a

*basic plot* that will result in making a finished, first-class production.

*Story With Interest.*

Is there any interest in the fact that Mary Williams, who idles her time away in ice-cream parlors and on the lawns of friendly neighbors, becomes stage struck, marries an actor and goes with a troupe against her mother's wishes? Not much interest there, but let us go a little further. Suppose the company, after a few months out, disbands, and as usual in the old, old story way, Mary is left to shift for herself, her husband having proved himself worthless and unworthy. But she turns homeward again, and after trials, tribulations and obstacles, reaches there and, even though the gossips may make it unpleasant for a time, Mary takes her old place on the lawn and again visits the soda grills. There is *no plot* there; there is no interest; there is nothing that would make for a story or for a photoplay. But let us treat the matter from another standpoint; instead of having Mary idle her time away, suppose we make her a girl of innocence, refined—a singer in the church choir of the little town in which she lives, placing her in a different environment. A theatrical troupe visits the town and Mary in some manner becomes acquainted with one of the players. She becomes fascinated and much against her mother's wishes and the pleas of her old pastor, she leaves the little town

of her birth with the troupe. Notice the *interest* that is immediately created.

*Weaving in Interest.*

Robert Louthan, the Thespian who caused Mary to leave her little home, persuades the girl to marry him. She informs her mother of her love for Louthan, but she *does not tell* of her secret marriage. After a short time business proves bad for the company, it disbands, and Louthan deserts the girl in a western town. In her grief, Mary is attracted to a little church, where she hears her mother's favorite song, "Rescue the Perishing." The interest increases. The girl has got into a situation where she does not know where to turn; she does not want to go back home, and she cannot reveal her secret to strangers. But the kindness of the old pastor and his friendly congregation are hard to withstand. Back home, another old man of God is the only comfort of Mary's mother. The chorus girls with whom Mary had formerly been associated expose Louthan and the exposure causes additional grief in the Williams home. The people of the little western town appoint their pastor to take Mary back home and to restore her to her mother. When the pastor from the West and the girl reach the little town of the East, the gossips have done their work well, but the two faithful ministers have come together and discovered that they are long-lost brothers. Mary's child is born, but the gossips are disarmed by her marriage certificate. The

pleasure of attending to the babe is divided between the two old pastor-brothers.

*The Heart Touch.*

The emotions have been awakened by the action of every character in the story; the plot was not overly strong, but the story contained *heart interest* and developed with a logical technique and construction to carry the intent, the story would become a realistic photoplay.

There are rules to follow to make a photoplay, just as there are methods to pursue in writing a short story, and a photoplay really is a short story, except that actions carry it instead of metaphors and fine words. A photoplay, from the author's standpoint, should be considered only from the writing part of it—the mechanical features left to others. A photoplay may be termed such, whether the story be original or be an adaptation; whether it be picturized from a novel or scenarioized from poetry.

Photoplay work has changed considerably since the first introduction of silent action; improvements have been made with mechanical effects; better photography has followed; lighting effects have made wonderful advancement; proficiency in photography has become most marked, and the part of the camera man has been brought to a point where almost the impossible, as under the sea and over the clouds work, has been done, and last, but not least, the quality of photoplays from the hands of scenario writers has improved.

*The Author's Part.*

Plot is the fundamental principle of a photoplay, technique merely the necessary adjunct to introduce and present it. The value of a photoplay *is measured by the interest it creates*. It is the combined work of the scenario writer, the editor, director, the camera man, and the players, but all in all, the scenario writer leads. A photoplay scenario contains the plot, the creation of the author; the production is the result of the studio. And as the author is representative of the studio and the studio the workshop for the modeling of the author's idea, the finished photoplay is the combination of both.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PHOTOPLAY ACTION.

THE lack of ability to weave logical action into a photoplay scenario has proved a handicap to many writers; and there are many writers who do not fully understand the correct meaning of action. Action does not simply mean the fast movement of the characters, but rather the gestures of the characters and the operation of the story in which such characters are involved. *Business action* is a strong factor in scenario work, but the action that counts most is the one that produces the effect on the screen and audience. It is what a player does in his action that makes that particular action strong. A story without well-developed action is a commonplace story, even though there might be some semblance of a plot worthy of construction. It is the thing the player *does*, it is the *way he does it* and the effect it produces that brings out the most salient parts of action that is so necessary in scenario work.

Action may be divided into several classes. In farce comedy the action of the players is quick and lively, while the action in dramatic production may not be so swift, but it can be made most telling in its effect. Action does not necessarily mean sensationalism, neither is it

necessary that the action be in the form of a thriller. Yet, in whatever way the author is able to write it, so that it produces the desired effect, is what is wanted. The public is divided into many classes as to likes and dislikes and what action might prove satisfactory to some would be displeasing to others.

### *Developing the Action.*

Action, as revealed in the scenes from start to finish, should be developed with a unity the same as the plot. One logical action after another must simply be written to show the simple unwinding of the plot as the story nears its close. No story should start off with quick action, but it should increase in action up to its anti-crisis, crisis, anti-climax and its climax. A good dramatic play goes slowly in its movement at the start, but moves with such effect that the action is plainly unfolded and the plot revealed in its fullness, or to an extent at least where it is readily understood by the audience. The value of action depends somewhat on how the player handles his part, and it is the overcoming of obstacles and particles in the story, handling them in such a way that the action is noticeably plain to the audience, that helps to "get a story over." A play without action would be no play at all, for a play with life, plot and character must have action from the very beginning.



*What Is Action?*

There can be action even in stupidity; there are plays in which there are parts taken by characters that show plain misunderstanding between characters and the action reveals it. Quarrel is *action*, the beggar on the streets asking alms is *action*, the meeting of two millionaires on the golf links is action, if there is something awakened by these incidents that leads one to expect more and yet not knowing what the unexpected will bring forth. But the action has implied something even though the plot at that particular point may not be plain.

Action joins different issues and puts together the thread of the plot; it sets the story in motion and leads it up to the end where there can be no dispute of its effectiveness, provided it has been logically placed and well handled.

There is no surer test of effective action than that which makes the audience *think*, and arouses the emotions of the spectators. "Action," as has often been said, "speaks louder than words." Yet the author who injects action into the story must have the power of conjuring and explaining this action fully to give the photoplay, in its production, the desired effect. The scenario writer must clothe his characters with action that will make them interesting.

*Real Emotion Stirs.*

Action can awaken emotions just as much as heart interest can. True emotion reveals

itself by stirring us into tears, laughter, indignation or even to pity. A prisoner standing before the bar shows no action; all the action seems to be centered about the court and what is expected from the court, but in a moment the prisoner turns, the *action begins*, the man is handcuffed, the court has passed its sentence, the bailiff takes the prisoner by the arm to lead him to his cell, the *action continues*; the prisoner stops abruptly and leans over a woman with a babe in her arms. He cannot throw his strong arms about the child nor caress the woman, his wife, but bending low he presses a kiss on the little child's lips, and leaning his head on the woman's shoulder, sobs out his repentance. This is *action* and it speaks louder than words. Sometimes we read a book in which no emotions are stirred. It is indifferent in its plot, cold in its make-up and showing a sure sign of emotional poverty. It neither makes us feel nor think, it is commonplace in its wording and contains nothing that touches our sympathy. There has been no action in such a book, therefore, even the words therein are far weaker than the action itself, at which the author may hint.

### *Strengthening the Action.*

In Isben's "The Lady from the Sea" our emotions are stirred by the action of the lady who has "wandered in from the sea and cannot find her way out again; and so she lies dying in the brackish waters." Action is

everywhere in such a story, which shows the soul is stronger than the sea, and when she makes her choice the action is made still stronger. One can see action in "The Pretenders," when King Skule exclaims: "Pure and blameless I swore to Ingsburg—and he scoffs at heaven." Still further action is noted when Paul Flida enters, crying out: "All is in an uproar! The impious deed has struck terror to your men, they flee into the churches."

Comparing books to photoplays, one might turn to Barrie or to McLaren and find their stories touching us to spontaneous tears and laughter. Their stories appeal to us—they have been made popular because they awaken our emotions. Other writers may have "bathed their work in an iridescent shimmer of fancy, which colors and lends beauty to their thoughts," yet they do not awaken our emotions or make us see the action as do the stories of other authors.

### *Creating of Sympathy.*

The same thing is noticeable in photoplay writing. Action can be made to touch the well-spring of tears or to make us become indignant over the action of some individual in the story brought about by ingratitude, boisterousness, abuse or even intoxication. We know that it is not real, but the *action has stirred us*; our sentiment has been aroused. Again referring to books, we may take Dickens, the greatest of all sentimentalists, who can

bring us to tears by his death scenes, but who never erred in helping the action of a story by the injection of sufficient sympathy to please the reader. All in all, the value of action in each case depends upon its depth and how and where it is placed and the final test is made, when we ask, has it aroused our emotions or our feelings, and what kind of impression has it left?

Only by first feeling the action and conceiving the same as the imagination is woven into scenario form can the author convey this action to the spectators. When this action, coupled with the plot, takes on the form of unity to display the characteristics of the characters in the story, the product—*action*—has been written in such a manner as to make it *real action*.

## CHAPTER V.

### PREPARING THE STORY.

**I**N the hurried setting down of ideas which are to be combined in the development of a photoplay, many writers forfeit the essential unexpectedness, and consequently the story suffers the loss of suspense, brought about by the writer's desire to complete the story too quickly. The beginning of the story is as important as the finishing, and the successful ending depends greatly upon the opening, therefore, preparation should be made one of the significant things to be accomplished by the author. Many writers are able to put quite a punch in an anti-climax and to finish the story with a tremendous grip, yet the introduction to such a story may be decidedly weak.

By preparation of a story is not merely meant neatness of construction or the quality of paper used, plain typing, or the manner of workmanship. Action-preparation is the more important, yet a neat script is always commendable. It has always been a mystery to the author of this book how some writers are able to prepare a story with such neatness as to make it at once attractive at the studio, yet the story may be plotless; while other writers, with an interesting story, are unable to put it into a commend-

able form. Many scripts, even though they may contain some essence of plot, are almost impossible on account of their unattractive appearance. It costs no more to neatly prepare a manuscript than it does to submit a carelessly written one.

*Perfect Stories Please.*

The author of this book cannot truthfully confirm statements made by many schools and individuals that aspiring authors lacking grammatical training, almost illiterate as it were, when it comes to applying intelligent English language to the preparation of the scenario, can write salable stories. For it is evident that every editor and reader likes to examine a story that has been prepared and written by one who is able to construct his story by the use of good language, good spelling and logic. Such a story is not only less confusing, but more pleasing, and sets a better mark for the owner.

In the preparation of a story, it must be developed in a way that the screen spectators can anticipate to some degree the plot and idea the author wishes to convey in his play. Preparation can go somewhat further and conceal, or partially conceal, such action in the story as suspense, suspense being one of the elements of a *good* photoplay.

The proper construction of a story means the overcoming of a long synopsis, conventionality, inconsistent action, and it means putting sufficient heart interest into the play, the creation

of an interesting crisis, the making of a strong climax, the building up of a story throughout which impossibilities have been eliminated; it means a story with scenes properly divided, a continuity that is plain, and an atmosphere in keeping with the character of the story.

### *Dividing the Scenes.*

After the idea has been thoroughly developed in the mind of the writer, then it becomes essential to write out and develop that idea into a logical, interesting photoplay. There is a legitimate principle attached to photoplay construction that must be followed out as minutely as if one were writing a drama for the regular stage. Some authors write the synopsis first, others write out their scenes and finish with synopsis. This is a matter of choice, rather than a rule. Yet, in either case, the story must be put together with a united sequence that will display cause and effect with the unity unimpaired. New writers generally make the error of jumping or badly dividing their scenes, and in doing this they not only impair the sequence of the story, but cripple the principle involved. No circumstances should be used in the unraveling of the story which are not self-explanatory on the screen. Every designed action *must* have a purpose.

In "The Pretenders," Bishop Nicholas is heard to say to Haaken: "I will stand against you so long as his head sits fast on his shoulders. Share with him. I will have no peace

in my coffin; I will rise again if you two share not the Kingdom! Neither of you shall add the other's height to his own stature. If that befall, there would be a giant in the land, and there no giant shall be; for I was never a giant!" Then the white-haired Arnison sinks back exhausted on his couch. A few words have told the story and the action is plain. Then Duke Skule, falling on his knees beside the couch, cries to Haaken: "Summon help! For God's pity sake; the bishop must not die yet!" The words spoken in Ibsen's play are plainly indicative of the intent and action were this produced in silent action. Here again, in "photoplaphy," actions take the place of words—the intent has been self-developed.

### *Following a Method.*

Referring to the manuscript alone, it is again a matter of choice whether the writer uses comas and semicolons or dashes, so long as the script is properly prepared and gives the plot in as few words as possible. It is of little concern to the editor which method has been applied. There are, however, rules to follow in either event. When a new character enters a scene, a dash or a period should be used previous to writing this, in order to show a logical division point, upon the entrance of each new player.

No script should be written hurriedly, and plots quickly conceived and more quickly developed are, as a rule, inferior to a plot well



thought out, and on which time and thought have been placed in order to properly develop it. Plot preparation embraces cast, synopsis, scenes, and where the author is able, a scene plot. If the writer has conceived a plot worthy of applying technique to, and is able to develop it, the significance of preparation should yet be borne in mind. Do not send a story out until you are absolutely sure that it is as perfect as you are able to make it. Take no chances on luck nor be satisfied with the thought that it is "good enough"—a story is never good enough unless it is salable.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE ART OF CONDENSATION.

UNQUESTIONABLY, it is easy for an amateur writer to properly construct a plot by the applying of almost an avalanche of technical terms to the idea, elaborating from the opening scene to the finale with an array of words instead of action. Proper technique is a thing that can be taught, but the idea cannot be invented nor created by another for the benefit of that writer who has, through instruction or study, graduated and completed a course that will give him perfect construction. And in the elaboration generally shown by the average amateur writer in building up a scenario, too much stress is laid on explanation and less on the essential parts of the scenes and story.

It must not be construed that moving-picture studios want ideas only; they want plots around which the proper technique has been woven, for, by combining the two, the author will get a better price for his story than if he had submitted a plot without technique or technique without a plot; but technique will not sell a story, for technique minus a plot is as useless as would be a train of cars without an engine.

#### *The Scenario Defined.*

Every studio editor and director is capable of determining the value and worth of the story

submitted after it has received a careful reading. Photoplay technique is simply a means to an end, and that is to enable an author to put his story briefly, plainly and concisely into the proper form for studio submission without having attached to it several pages of detailed matter, unnecessary action and explanation, all of which tend to increase the size of the story and lessen its value many times in the eyes of the reader. A photoplay story is supposed to be written in scenario form, and scenario form simply means a skeleton of the play. Webster defines scenario as "a preliminary sketch or plot of the main incidents; a synopsis of a play showing the action of the characters, entrance and exit."

In other words, a photoplay is simply a story told in action by the use of as few words as possible. No writer who desires to make a success of photoplay work should be satisfied with merely accomplishing moving-picture studio technique, unless the writer is able to condense and put into the very shortest number of words the idea or plot which he wishes to convey to the editor, as the editor is far more able to judge from the standpoint of stagecraft and production just what action and detail the plot requires.

*Time is Limited.*

Successful photoplay writing cannot be completely learned unless condensed-plot rudiments are cemented firmly to technique. Technique

points out the way to do things and the plot climax, as explained, is the result thereof. One must remember in photoplay writing that there is not sufficient time allowed to introduce the dramatis personæ as in legitimate productions. Of course, it is understood that technique is important, and it should also be understood that theory or the visualization of the story, as seen by the author, will not always carry a story over, because it may be written in such a manner that the reader and editor would be unable to grasp the idea as defined and intended by the writer; but ordinarily the editors, readers and directors will not only catch the intent desired, but will also see an opportunity to enhance the value of the plot by strengthening it at different points.

Terseness, a thing desired in the writing of leaders, has the same relation to them as brevity should have to the story itself.

### *Condensation Illustrated.*

In the "Wearing of the Green" we find the lead character, "Officer Murphy," making enemies of some street urchins by breaking up their game of marbles. In the opening of this story, a terse leader is used with these words:

#### **Officer Murphy Makes Enemies.**

This leader tells the story as clearly and is as well defined as if it had read like this:

**Officer Murphy Breaks Up the Boys' Game of Marbles.**

The following is the opening scene of this photoplay condensed, yet plain:

Scene 1. EXTERIOR, STREET, DAY, front of small hall, over doorway hanging sign, reading:

HEADQUARTERS OF ST. PATRICK'S  
DAY COMMITTEE.

Several boys play marbles on walk—Murphy enters, in uniform, ordering lads away, much to their plainly indicated anger—Irish friends of Murphy enter—happy greeting—all exit into hall.

It is plainly understood that Murphy, in breaking up the boys' game, aroused their wrath. This was all that was necessary to convey in this scene.

As a comparison, the following scene is written to show wherein elaboration and detail would not work to any advantage:

Scene 1. EXTERIOR, BUSY STREET, DAY, in front of a small building supposed to be hall; a large sign hanging over the doorway, which reads as follows:

HEADQUARTERS OF ST. PATRICK'S  
DAY COMMITTEE.

A number of small boys are seen playing marbles on the sidewalk—Officer Murphy enters scene dressed in full uniform; he orders boys away and they immediately show their anger—several Irish friends of Officer Murphy come into scene, they have a happy greeting—then all exit into the hall.

The essential parts to which the editor's attention is called in the briefer scene are simply, street, hall, sign, boys, game, Murphy's friends and greetings, with these points

shown the editor and having read the synopsis and knowing the plot of the story, it is all he desires to know as to his being able to produce the story from the script.

The shorter scene is not only much less confusing, but there is sufficient information in it to show the action desired. The condensed scene is just as interesting and just as clear as the one with added detail and wording; it is just as plain, yet its brevity does not detract from its merits. The less detail the clearer the story and the more easily and readily grasped. Ordinarily, most any scene can be told in two or three lines.

### *Importance of Brevity.*

Condensation is a thing to practice, a thing to accomplish; it can be mastered, it has been done and is being accomplished every day by writers who realize the importance of brevity in photoplay construction, and who have matched this art against the long, detailed, unessential word-building scenario of many other writers. Put nothing in a scene that cannot be quickly understood and developed. Time is the essence of success in photoplay scenarios, because it must be remembered that a one-reel scenario must be depicted in from fifteen to seventeen minutes, and there is no time to unravel details or unnecessary action.

If there is a street scene in the story, simply state it as such; one does not have to say that it is on the right-hand side, left-hand side or near

a corner. The director will know where the story should be staged. Further along in the story of "The Wearing of the Green" is a street scene written thus:

Scene 16. STREET, DAY.

The parade passes, flags flying, banners seen, band playing.

All the editor and director need to know is given in this scene in nine words. It would not help or strengthen this particular scene to write it this way:

Scene 16. STREET, DAY.

Many people seen on the sidewalk, the parade approaches, passes; flags are seen flying, banners are discovered and the band is playing.

Is the twenty-three-word scene any more clear or any better understood than the nine-word scene? No, and the editor appreciates the former.

### *Evolving a Plot.*

The plot of the story, "The Wearing of the Green," was that the small boys, made angry at the breaking up of their game, play a boy's prank upon Officer Murphy. Murphy was the leader of his Irish coterie of friends and a big parade was planned for St. Patrick's Day. The boys, in revenge, secured several hundred yards of orange-colored ribbon from the Orangemen and tied it to the door of Murphy's home. Murphy's comrades discovered the ribbon and declared Murphy unfaithful to the cause and he, therefore, lost his position at the head of

the parade. Later, however, through Mrs. Murphy, the plot of the boys is discovered, and Murphy is made happy by again regaining the leadership, which is shown a little later in a scene given as follows:

**Scene 23. ANOTHER PART OF STREET.**

*Parade passes, Murphy shown as leader.*

Ten words give to the editor the action desired, yet nothing could be more clear, but it could be elaborated upon with unessential action, such as indicated earlier.

When a minor accident happens in a city, the city editor tells the reporter to write half a stick or, perhaps, a stick on it and he only wants a half a stick or a stick—it does not mean a quarter of a column. The accident may be of considerable interest to a few people in the vicinity where it occurred, but it would be of little interest to the general readers of the paper scattered throughout the city. The same brevity in the newspaper article is applicable to the scenario. If a photoplay story is written with a volume of detail and unnecessary action, it is not a scenario, for “scenario” simply means the skeleton of the plot—the condensing of the idea, action and development into a concrete form.

### *Value of Condensation.*

A short synopsis, condensed scenes with brief development, yet clear, means much to the author and editor, as it will consume less time of both. It takes more time, more patience and



more study to find the pivot point of a good plot in a voluminous story than if it had been briefly told. It has taken the author longer to write such a story, the length of it has not increased its value, if anything, it has decreased it in the eyes of the reader; and a bulky manuscript takes more postage, and often the envelope in which it is mailed becomes torn and the story mutilated.

A one-reel photoplay can be fully explained in a two hundred to two hundred and fifty word synopsis, and the whole story told in five to seven hundred words. It can be condensed even shorter than that, but if photoplaywrights will hew to this line, there will be less likelihood of their stories being returned marked, "Too much detail," or, "Held for postage."

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE UNAVAILABLE STORY.

**A** CONVINCING example of the average amateur writer's unavailable story is plainly shown by the model scenario entitled "Mabel's Marriage." There are many things in the amateur's story that are unnecessary, from an inappropriate title to an illogical or weak climax. Even after the play is begun the average amateur writer falls far short of applying the necessary visualization and many of the essential parts and particles that go to make up an acceptable scenario.

In "Mabel's Marriage" the synopsis is typical, because of its length, unnecessary wording and construction, of the average new scenario writer's effort. Photoplay writing, like legitimate stagecraft endeavor, is the simple process of thought coupled with an interesting plot around which must be woven the necessary action and applied technique to make the story one of interest, whether it be comedy, farce comedy, drama or tragedy. It is not the correct structural parts of a story, well put together, that tells the worth of the story—it is the plot and interest shown therein and the plot is the combination of happenings demonstrating the intent, idea or theme of the writer. In

the last analysis, in judging an amateur writer's work, the division into scenes of the story and plot is simply a division of the idea-germ into parts or periods of progression, and this division is accomplished and the logical action of the story brought about only by the author having the proper conception of construction.

### *Comparison of Stories.*

The theme of "Mabel's Marriage" is primarily a weak one as developed by an amateur writer, and not overly strong when revamped by a professional, because of the fact that the story in itself is not one readily adaptable for moving-picture purposes because it does *not* contain enough real comedy and dramatic interest to class it among the better-priced scenario productions. For the amateur writer, it is earnestly urged that a careful comparison be made between "Mabel's Marriage," the work of a new writer, and "An Interrupted Honeymoon," a new title for the same story revamped and rewritten by an old writer.

Note the *unnecessary* action and words in the *first* story, and the elimination of such and the plainness and simplicity of action and depiction in the *second*.

The same laws and rules that govern legitimate playwriting also govern scenario writing and successful photoplay writing is gained only by hard work and education. Someone has said, "Anything which stops short of practical application may be learning, but it is not edu-

cation," and thus the education of proper plot building and construction must be procured by the writer who desires to evolve from an amateur writer into a professional. There are many good scenarios submitted by amateur writers, at least the plots are original and unique; and on the other hand, professionals do not always write acceptable and available stories. The amateur cannot hope to gain success in scenario writing to a point of profitableness without the understanding of plot analysis and construction requirements. It is hoped, therefore, that the critical eye of the professional and the untrained one of the amateur may both be riveted on the comparison shown in the two scenarios presented herewith.

---

### "MABEL'S MARRIAGE."

[The Amateur's Story.]

#### SYNOPSIS.

John and Mabel Sharp, engaged for a short while, are later married and plan to make a visit to their Uncle Henry in the city. Their friends gather at the station and a deluge of rice follows. Before leaving the station John sends a telegram to his Uncle Henry in a distant city telling him that he and his bride were coming to pay him a short visit. After bidding good-bye to their friends at the station they board a train and are hurried away. They are compelled to change cars and when changing they miss connections. The time comes for their arrival in the city and Uncle Henry and his wife are there to meet them and are very much worried because the bride and groom have not arrived. John and his wife get on a train and are later suspected by a detective as being

a pair of swindlers wanted in Chicago for a swindling job. The detective telegraphs a description of the pair to his headquarters in the city. On account of missing connections, John and his wife arrive in the city, but not caring to wake up their uncle and aunt, they go to a private hotel. It turns out that Uncle Henry Brown and his wife are reformers and good church people and they, with others, join in a raid on the hotel which John and Mabel stop at. The groom goes out to buy a lunch for his new wife and while he is out his Uncle Henry and other raiders arrest the bride and take her to jail. In the meantime, while John is out to buy the lunch, he is arrested by a detective from headquarters on account of the description wired earlier in the day. There is trouble and a great time at police headquarters and it is a very difficult matter for the police judge to unravel the tangle and John and his new wife have a very hard time convincing Uncle Henry and his wife about their accidentally stopping at the hotel, but things are straightened out and Uncle Henry and his wife take the two young married people home, at which place everybody agrees that Mabel's marriage has been a lively affair.

#### *Characters.*

John Sharp.....The Groom  
 Mabel Sharp.....The Bride  
 Henry Brown.....The City Uncle  
 Mrs. Brown.....His Wife  
 Policemen inspector, detectives, hotel clerk,  
 reformers, conductor, etc., etc.

#### **MABEL'S MARRIAGE.**

- Scene 1. Exterior, railroad station. John and Mabel Sharp are at the station. Their friends throw much rice at them—old shoes seen about. The train pulls in and bride and groom get on as the train leaves. Friends wave their hands.
- Scene 2. Interior, telegraph office. Operator is taking message—he writes and then reads:

Oshkosh, Wis., July 28.

Henry Brown,  
Chicago, Ill.

We have just been married and are coming to spend our honeymoon with you. Expect to arrive to-night.

John and Mabel Sharp.

Same scene, the telegraph operator does not know which Henry Brown the telegram is intended for; he looks in directory and telephone book, then gives message to boy, who exits.

**Sub-title—THE HAPPY PAIR MISS THEIR TRAIN.**

**Scene 3.** Exterior, another railroad station. John and his wife rush into view as the train which they wanted to get on pulls out. They have just missed the train. John looks at watch—then kisses his wife. Mabel breaks down and cries. Both are very much excited and other people seem to be very much amused over the situation.

**Scene 4.** Exterior, private house. Telegraph boy from scene 2 comes into scene, rings door bell of the house and woman answers. She signs for telegram and says "this telegram is not intended for us"—the boy leaves scene.

**Scene 5.** Exterior of another house. Some people are seen in doorway; telegraph boy enters, gives them telegram but they shake their heads and say it is not theirs. The boy exits.

**Scene 6.** Exterior, another house. Colored woman discovered sweeping; the boy enters scene and inquires if Henry Brown lives there—the woman drives him away, hitting him with broom.

**Leader.** THAT NIGHT.

**Scene 7.** Interior, train coach. The bride and groom are sitting together in one seat and are asleep with their arms about each other. Other passengers laugh at them.

**Scene 8.** Telegraph office as in scene 2. The telegraph boy enters, he is all tired out and says he cannot find the right Henry Brown.

**Sub-title—THE REFORMERS GET BUSY.**

**Scene 9.** Interior, police station house. Mr. Henry Brown and his wife, church pastor and church members, discovered. They tell inspector that they have been investigating things and all of them try to talk at once. The inspector listens to their story and talks with other officers. The telegraph boy enters scene and gives message to inspector, who reads:

/      Madison, Wis., July 28.

Police Inspector,  
Chicago, Ill.

I have discovered two people on train No. 39 who I believe are swindlers. Man is dressed in black and woman is dressed in a white dress with a big picture hat. Watch for them.  
Greening.

Same scene. The inspector calls a policeman and gives him telegram, then he exits. The reformers begin talking again, while the messenger boy listens. Mr. Brown makes a speech, talking to inspector, who says:

**Sub-title—"MR. BROWN, ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT? I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE THAT CONDITIONS ARE SUCH AS YOU SAY THEY ARE."**

Same scene. Mr. Brown declares his remarks are true. The telegraph boy then thinks this must be the right Mr. Brown when he hears his name mentioned and shows him telegram. Mr. Brown says he is the right man, tells his wife and hurries out of scene. The telegraph boy laughs at this.

- Scene 10. Exterior, city railroad station. Henry Brown and his wife discovered; they look about somewhat bewildered.
- Scene 11. Same as in scene 7. John and Mabel just waking up from their sleep in train coach as train is pulling into Chicago. They arise and kiss each other, take their grips and walk down aisle.
- Scene 12. Same as scene 10. Henry Brown and his wife still at same place, they show disappointment and then exit.
- Scene 13. Interior, parlor. Uncle and Aunt enter scene. Seem to be much worried about John and Mabel; they get ready for bed.
- Scene 14. Same as in scene 10. John and Mabel come from depot, John looks at his watch and shows great surprise. Policeman and detective enter scene and watch John and Mabel. Policeman exits.
- Leader. JOHN AND MABEL FIND IT IS TOO LATE  
TO VISIT THEIR UNCLE AND AUNT  
AND GO TO A HOTEL TO SPEND THE  
NIGHT.
- Same scene. They look up and down street while detective watches them with suspicious eyes. They exit with detective following.
- Scene 15. Interior, hotel. Several men enter and whisper to the clerk and then pass through by other doors. Several women enter and act the same.
- Scene 16. Interior, room. A card game is on, men and women are drinking. Waiters serve them. A man stands at the door and keeps watch.
- Scene 17. Exterior, hotel. The reformers and church people enter scene and look at hotel suspiciously. John and Mabel enter scene, look at reformers, then enter hotel. Detective enters with policeman; reformers appeal to officer to "pull" the hotel but he laughs. The reformers appear to



be angry, talk to each other and then hurry away.

**Scene 18.** Same as scene 15. John and Mabel write their names on register but do not like the place. Detective enters and keeps his eye on John and Mabel as bellboy takes them to their room.

**Scene 19.** Same as 16. Bellboy enters, whispers to man at the door and John and his bride follow him. Detective enters scene and looks suspiciously after John and Mabel.

**Scene 20.** Same as scene 13. Henry Brown and wife are ready to retire, but their associate reformers talk with them and say hotel should be raided. Brown and wife decide to go with them.

**Scene 21.** Interior, bedroom. Bride and groom discovered; they embrace each other as bellboy exits. Mabel tells John she is hungry and he says he will go out and get her something to eat. He exits.

**Scene 22.** Exterior, street. Reformers and church people and Brown and his wife discovered talking with several policemen—all exit.

**Scene 23.** Same as scene 17. John enters from hotel. Detective enters and arrests John as a swindler. John objects to arrest but detective leads him out of scene.

**Scene 24.** Interior, hotel. Church people and reformers with policemen crowd into hotel office.

**Scene 25.** Same as in scene 21. Mabel is worried because John is staying away so long; looks out window and cries.

**Scene 26.** Same as in scene 16. Men and women hear noise and know something is wrong—they hear people down at the door.

**Scene 27.** Same as in scene 21. Mabel is afraid as other men and women rush into room and then lock the door.

- Scene 28.** Same as in scene 9. The plain clothes man discovered with John, making report to police inspector.
- Scene 29.** Same as in 27. Church people and reformers enter room and arrest all the people. Mabel cries and says she is not one of the crowd. She fights with her Uncle Henry but she does not know it is he.
- Scene 30.** Same as in 15. Policeman at telephone talking.
- Scene 31.** Same as in scene 9. Police Inspector at telephone, evidences surprise, nodding head, yes—he touches button and several policemen enter scene.
- Scene 32.** Interior, cell. John is looking out through the bars and cries.
- Scene 33.** Same as in scene 17. The policemen and reformers have arrested hotel people and bring them from the hotel. The prisoners are put into the patrol wagon, Mabel still fighting with her uncle.
- Scene 34.** Same as in scene 9. Policemen and reformers enter scene with their prisoners. The prisoners are stood before the inspector and Mabel is discovered crying. Detective enters and recognizes Mabel as the partner of John and thinks she is also one of the swindlers. John is sent for and when he enters Mabel throws her arms about him. John tells inspector that Mabel is his wife—that they have just been married. John's uncle sees he has made a mistake, takes telegram from pocket, and then tells inspector that John and Mabel are his nephew and niece. Plain clothes detective sees that he has made a mistake and John and Mabel with uncle and aunt depart for their home and all ends happily.

## “AN INTERRUPTED HONEYMOON.”

[“Mabel’s Marriage” revised and rewritten.]

### SYNOPSIS.

John and Mabel, newlyweds, depart from their home town station amidst a shower of rice and old shoes, John previously having sent a telegram to his uncle in a distant city that he would spend his honeymoon with him. But they miss connections. Uncle and aunt are worried. En route, John and Mabel are suspected of being a pair of much-wanted swindlers, and their description is wired to Chicago police headquarters. John and Mabel arrive in the city, but too late to disturb uncle and aunt, and they decide to go to a hotel. Uncle and aunt are great reformers—crusaders—and the hotel at which the newlyweds stop is “pulled” that night, while John goes for a lunch for the bride, his uncle arresting Mabel in the raid. John is nabbed by a plain clothes man on the wired description. At police headquarters the affair is untangled, but John and Mabel have a hard time in convincing uncle of certain things and harmony comes only after a much-interrupted two hours’ honeymoon.

### *Cast of Characters.*

John	}	Newlyweds .....	Leads
Mabel			
Henry Brown.....		The Uncle	
Mrs. Brown.....		The Aunt	
Police, inspector, detective, hotel attaches, reformers, trainmen, etc.			

### AN INTERRUPTED HONEYMOON.

#### The Action.

**Scene 1. EXTERIOR, DEPOT.**

John and Mabel assailed with rice, shoes, etc., by friends—train pulls in, bride and groom board, train exits.

**Scene 2. INTERIOR, TELEGRAPH OFFICE.**

Operator takes message, writes, reads:

Insert

Oshkosh, Wis., July 28.

Henry Brown,  
Chicago, Ill.

Just married, will honeymoon with you. En route. John and Mabel.

Back to scene—Operator puzzled, "What Henry Brown?" is the question—directory and telephone books searched. Boy is given message and exits.

Leader.

## THEY MISS CONNECTIONS

Scene 3. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER DEPOT.

John and Mabel rush into scene as train departs, John looks at watch, inquires when next train will go, Mabel breaks down and sobs—both are excited; others waiting on train, newsboy and trainmen are amused over situation, embarrassing newlyweds.

Scene 4. EXTERIOR, HOUSE.

Telegraph boy from scene 2 enters, rings door bell, woman answers, signs for wire, reads, shakes head, "This is not for me"—boy exits.

Scene 5. BACK TO 3.

John and Mabel alone on platform.

Scene 6. EXTERIOR, HOUSE.

Colored woman sweeps, boy enters, asks for Henry Brown, woman drives him away—boy more puzzled.

Leader.

## THAT NIGHT.

Scene 7. INTERIOR, PASSENGER COACH.

John and Mabel in seat, asleep, arms about each other; passengers amused.

Scene 8. AS IN 2.

Boy enters, tired out; unable to locate right Henry Brown.

Leader.

## THE REFORMERS.

Scene 9. INTERIOR, POLICE STATION.

Henry Brown, wife, pastor, church members and others file into inspector's office, laying

findings of investigators before inspector, all trying to talk at once—inspector tells them to take seats, then listens as he consults with officers regarding stories—boy from scene 2 enters, hands message to inspector who reads:

**Insert.**

Madison, Wis., July 28.

Police Inspector Shaw,  
Chicago Ill.

Suspicious pair on train No. 39. Believe them Swindler Jones and woman companion. He in black suit, she in white dress, picture hat. Shadow them.

Greening.

Back to scene—Inspector calls officer, hands wire, gives instructions, officer exits—reformers tell their tales, messenger boy standing listening—Henry Brown rises, makes emphatic remarks, leading inspector to say:

**Cut-in.**

"MR. BROWN, THAT'S A VERY BROAD ASSERTION; ARE YOU SURE SUCH CONDITIONS EXIST?"

Back to scene—Brown reiterates assertion—messenger boy gets idea "Can this be the Henry Brown?"—boy interrupts reformer, shows telegram, Brown acknowledges being right Brown, grabs his wife, dons hat and the two hurry away, much to surprise and annoyance of others—inspector thinks less of charges, and tells other reformers to go—messenger boy is amused.

**Scene. 10. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER DEPOT, NIGHT TINT.**  
Henry Brown and wife rush into scene, then enter station.

**Scene 11. BACK TO 7.**  
Conductor awakens John and Mabel with, "Chicago is next stop"—they arise, kiss each other, brush clothes, take grips and walk down aisle.  
Cut.

- Scene 12. AS IN 10.**  
Henry Brown and wife come from depot, look about, disappointed, then walk out of scene.
- Scene 13. INTERIOR, PARLOR.**  
The Browns enter, worried about missing nephew, prepare to retire. Cut.
- Scene 14. AS IN 10.**  
John and Mabel come from depot, look about, John consults his watch, shows surprise at late hour. Officer from scene 9, with plain clothes man enters, watching John and Mabel; they whisper to each other, and officer walks out of scene.
- Leader THEY DECIDE TO GO TO A HOTEL INSTEAD OF DISTURBING UNCLE HENRY.**  
Back to scene—John and Mabel look up and down street, arousing suspicions of plain clothes man, then walk out of scene, plain clothes man following.
- Scene 15. INTERIOR, CHEAP HOTEL, OFFICE.**  
Men enter, whisper to clerk, exit through other doors; several women do same—an air of secrecy about place.
- Scene 16. INTERIOR, HOTEL ROOM.**  
Men seen playing cards, drinking; waiters pass to and fro; a sentinel seen at door—several women are admitted quietly, they chat with the men.
- Scene 17. EXTERIOR, CHEAP HOTEL.**  
Reformers from scene 9 enter, stop, eye place suspiciously; watch men and women enter—John and Mabel enter, eye reformers queerly, then enter hotel. Plain clothes man enters scene, followed by officer—reformers endeavor to have officer "pull" the place, but he refuses—reformers decide to take the law in their hands, hold consultation, then hurriedly exit, as officer smiles—plain clothes man whispers to him, then enters hotel.

**Scene 18. AS IN 15.**

John and Mabel at desk, registering, show they don't like appearance of place; clerk eyes them curiously. Plain clothes man enters, watches John and Mabel as bellboy escorts them to stairway.

**Scene 19. AS IN 16.**

Bellboy is admitted, alone, whispers to sentinel, then John and Mabel follow, all three passing through room and out another door; John and Mabel in repulsive attitude. Plain clothes man enters, looks about, decides John and Mabel are trying to make "getaway." Looks about, then exits way of entrance.

**Scene 20. BACK to 13.**

The Browns, in nightdress attire, talk with crowd of reformers, all impressed with desire to "raid the hotel;" Browns exit to change clothes; other reformers determined.

**Scene 21. INTERIOR, BEDROOM.**

John and Mabel, standing, embrace, as bellboy exits laughingly—Mabel registers hunger, John says, "Wait here, dear, I'll get you something to eat," kisses her and exits.

**Scene 22. EXTERIOR, STREET, NIGHT TINT.**

Reformers, headed by the Browns, discuss proposed raid with several policemen, the latter reluctant to lead reformers—all exit.

**Scene 23. AS IN 17.**

John comes from hotel, looks up and down street, stands. Plain clothes man comes from hotel, decides to arrest John as Swindler Jones—John's protests are in vain, plain clothes man shows badge and walks John out of scene.

**Scene 24. AS IN 15.**

Reformers and officers crowd hotel office, clerk is held from giving alarm, bellboy is grabbed by a reformer and held; procedure is discussed.

- Scene 25. AS IN 16.  
Occupants hear noise, detect something wrong, show fright—all hurriedly discuss "getaway"—reformers are pounding on door, it gives way as occupants of room rush through another door into
- Scene 26. BACK TO 21.  
Mabel is frightened as others rush in upon her, locking door after them.
- Scene 27. AS IN 9.  
Plain clothes man enters with John, makes report to inspector, who doesn't give John much of a chance to explain.
- Scene 28. BACK to 25.  
Reformers and police break into room, placing all under arrest—Mabel resents arrest, sobs, then gets brave and fights off Henry Brown (neither knowing of their relationship) with hat pin.
- Scene 29. BACK TO 15.  
Flash officer at 'phone, talks excitedly.
- Scene 30. BACK TO 9.  
Flash inspector on 'phone, shows surprise, nods head affirmatively, calls several officers and orders them in patrol to hotel, etc.
- Scene 31. INTERIOR, JAIL CELL.  
Flash John peering out bars; is broken-hearted, sobs.
- Scene 32. BACK TO 17.  
Officers and reformers bring prisoners from hotel as patrol wagon backs into view—prisoners are loaded into wagon, Mabel held tightly by Brown, wagon exits, several reformers following.
- Scene 33. AS IN 9.  
Reformers and officers enter with prisoners, Brown leading in telling inspector, "I told you so, etc." Inspector lines up prisoners, when Mabel makes a plea—inspector listens. Plain



clothes man enters, recognizes Mabel as companion of man arrested as Jones, and tells inspector, etc., etc. Inspector tells officer to bring in Jones (John); officer exits as Mabel tries to explain, reformers and Brown making light of her appeal.

Scene 34. AS IN 31.

John still peering out bars, officer from scene 35 enters, unlocks door and leads John to

Scene 35. BACK TO 33.

Officer returns with John, who rushes to Mabel, but they are held apart by officers and Brown—John declares Mabel is his wife; that they are on their honeymoon, were to stop with uncle, etc., etc. Brown wakes up, recalls telegram, pulls it out.

Scene 36. FLASH TELEGRAM OF SCENE 2. (Close-up).

Scene 37. BACK TO SCENE 35.

Brown puts two and two together and recognition follows—John explains to inspector about missing train, going to hotel, going for something to eat, etc., etc., and inspector believes him; Mabel refuses to make up with Brown for time, but Mrs. Brown and inspector and plain clothes man explain and John and Mabel and Browns exit, in happy frame of mind.

### *Comparison of Synopses.*

In comparing the two synopses, the amateur's version and the experienced author's method, the condensation of the latter is at once noticeable. The first synopsis contains 379 words, while the other has but 177—202 words less, and yet it *tells the story* just as well. In the first scene, the amateur requires *thirty-seven* words to explain the action, while the revamped story uses but *eighteen*.

There is no insert mentioned in the second

scene of the first story, but the author leaves it to the editor to *write it into his story*, while the experienced writer *has put it in*. The leader preceding scene three contains six words in the first scenario, and but three in the second. The *three* words tell the action and intent to be conveyed. We know the couple is happy—why tell it by using three words, when all the audience wants to know is that the bride and groom *have missed their train?* The scene-action is told in fifty-four words by the new writer and in forty words by the old one.

Note the location of scenes in the first story is *run in with the action*, making it more difficult to follow. Compare this to the separate-line wording and placing in the second story, and note how much easier it is for the editor and director *to know what set is necessary and where*.

#### *Amateurs' Inconsistencies.*

The reader should note, also, that the new writer calls some of his *leaders sub-titles* and some of his *sub-titles leaders*. They both mean the same, but there should be consistency in their use. Make them *all* sub-titles or *all* leaders.

In scene nine, a *cut-in is required*, but the amateur writer calls it a *sub-title*. This is dialogue, and could not be anything else but a *cut-in*—sometimes called a *cut-in leader*.

In scenes eleven and thirteen of the revised story, the reader will find the word *cut* at the

end of the action. The first story does not contain it. This is used (at the discretion of the director) to shorten the scene, as the action given is to identify these characters and to keep up the interest. They may be held in these scenes longer than given or called for by the author, but if so, the director will know how long it should be.

The comparison shows the lack of properly-applied technique at the hands of the amateur writer, although it is readily observed that he *has partially grasped the method of construction*. The same errors are almost universal among new writers, and it is not to be wondered at, because they know such a thing as technique exists, and, therefore, they apply it as they *see it, not as it is required*. Only experience, watchfulness and study will enlighten them, and show them when a story is technically correct.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CONSTRUCTION.

**T**HE art of photoplay construction, even aside from the applying of proper technique, is one of the essential things of this class of writing. The author has said in previous articles that it was manifestly impossible to lay down any general rule or method that would apply to all authors, as there are never two writers, probably, who pursue the same routine in drafting their idea and putting it into proper shape. It is necessary, of course, that method be used and the best to follow is that laid down by some authority on photoplay work.

Photoplay construction means minuteness, it means the skeletonizing of the story with all the verbose matter eliminated. Scenario means briefness and as few words as possible must be used in telling the story; whether it is a one-reel comedy or a five-reel dramatic play the story can be told with unity, sequence and plausibility by the use of a limited number of words. In writing and constructing a scenario, a tentative plan should be mapped out. The story should be written out in story form and then the art of condensation applied, the author remembering that the idea only and the

action of the characters sufficient to give the editor and director a broad idea of the play are all that is demanded.

*Improving the Story.*

There are different ways of planning a story and what may work successfully with one writer may prove to be a failure with another, so that authors must seek out and find the one suitable to their own way and mode of working. One should not be satisfied with the first scenario that grows out of the author's construction, for, generally, every scenario can be bettered both as to its being condensed and the plain unraveling of the plot, identification of the characters and the development of the theme.

The playwrights of the Italian *commedia dell'arte* depended upon a scheme or scenes of a plot, leaving the intent of the plot of the story to be acted out by the actors. Once a play is clearly defined in the mind, careful attention being given to detail and looking forward to the logical end, the work of placing this on paper is not difficult. While the frame-work of the story should be substantial, it need not be subservient to the author's idea of unnecessary wording.

The scenario is to the film producer what the complete action is to the legitimate manager. The same introduction of the interesting necessary characters must be made in the photoplay

as in the legitimate. Every character must have a purpose and serve that purpose. There must not be too many characters because they are hard to follow on the screen and at times the author will find they are hard to dispose of.

### *Hiding the Climax.*

After the characters are introduced there must be obstacles, there must be places made and situations created that bring these characters to a point wherein they cause suspense and wherein the author must work to logically get them out of their different positions. This is where construction tells—this is where the plot becomes interesting.

In constructing the story, it must be so mapped and laid out that the climax of the story cannot be discerned when the play opens. This has been the fault of a great many writers and this fault is one of the reasons why amateurs' stories are rejected. Possibility and plausibility are constructive periods in photoplay work. Extraordinary and exceptional things can be drafted into a scenario, but they must be plausible; they must be made to appear plain on the screen that the intent may be grasped by the audience.

Another essential thing in construction is in keeping down the expense. A gripping drama, a strong virile story can be told in many scenes or in a few scenes, and yet if many scenes are used there can be duplicates and cut-backs so as to cut down the expense. Atmosphere, of

course, is a great element in staging a story. A story without atmosphere would be worthless. How much stronger is a sea story beside the sea or on the water, than if the action were told in a house looking out over the ocean. The only atmosphere a story like this would have would be as seen through the windows and therefore this element would be lacking.

*Leaving the Impression.*

Construction has something to do with the climax of the story. Ordinarily, photoplays, magazine stories, novels and the legitimate dramas have happy endings, yet one must be careful not to make the climax too conventional. The well-constructed climax must be the part that leaves the impression on the audience and through construction sufficient feeling and suspense are created that at the end of the story something will appear to take away any monotony that may have entered into it. The climax may be sudden or it may drag, and whichever way it goes it is a matter of construction, but construction must be tempered with judgment and applied to the plot in a way that will properly portray the characterization and the idea of the author the way he had originated and framed it. It must show his ending, his way of doing things so that his own individuality enters into it and not that of the producer and editor, for, if the story be properly constructed, containing the heart interest and plot, the producers will stage it according to

the scenario's construction and according to the author's idea as to the way it should be produced.

*Avoiding Entanglements.*

In the construction of a photoplay, every element that enters into the production must be considered—the story or plot, the characters, action, unity of action, incident, suspense, surprise, interest, sympathy, variety, plausibility, crises and the climax. Knowing that the plot is the first thing to be considered, construction follows and the construction may be simple or complex as the story warrants. The plainer and briefer the better. After the author has formed his plot, whether it is a triangular love affair, the mysterious disappearance of an heir-ess, the deception of a bank cashier, the unseen killing of a rajah, the defeat of a politician, a tragedy of the sea, a mother's love, the fall of an empire or a reporter's scoop, it must be devoid of entanglement that will make the construction difficult to build—it must treat merely with the characters and actions of the men and women in the story. In construction, the characters must fit into the story and the story must fit the characters; there must be a distinction between the characters, they must be self-consistent and so placed as to serve as a foil to each other.

*By-Play Growth.*

Incidents and by-play grow out of the story as it progresses in its development, but one



must be careful of the re-action which is apt to follow. The lead character or characters must stand out pre-eminently forward from the opening of the story to the crisis and climax. There must be such a contrast between the lead or leads and the subsidiary characters that each attracts immediate attention.

Proper construction means the proper conception of the play satisfactory to the spectators. They must be made to understand and while they must be kept in suspense and ignorance as to what is to follow, there must be enough of the suspense action violated that now and then the spectators are relieved; but this is a situation that relies solely on how it is constructed.

The construction of the scenario starts at the foundation—the cast of characters. On the foundation is laid the frame work of the building, and the scenes that follow are like the shingles of the roof; when the house is completed from cellar to roof, so is the scenario complete from the cast to the climax. The incidents and by-play of the scenario are the windows and doors of the house and the action and plot of the story are like the furnishings of the house itself. And as the house should be set in the proper environment, so the story should be laid in the proper atmosphere.

### *Motive of the Story.*

A properly constructed photoplay is one that can be acted and if it is impracticable for stage

production, it is wholly out of tune with photoplay work. A photoplay cannot be told or narrated; it must be acted and the plot must find its natural expression in passion, emotion, and action. In photoplays, kisses, frowns, laughter, caresses, dying, eating, running, shooting, knife thrusts and all the elements that enter into dramatic composition can be acted.

The motive of the story is measured by the strength of its plot and the proper construction should be applied to it to give it the proper length whether it be a one-reel story, three or more. Construction can make or mar a photoplay production, and when a plot is properly constructed the author has made for himself a better standing in the studio to which his story is submitted.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE DRAMATIC PLOT STORY.

THE dramatic photoplay, full of interest, emotion and suspense; a play that is *felt* by the author and by the audience, is the one story of all photoplay stories that must of necessity be dressed in all the fashion of dramatic requisites. The dramatic photoplay must be just what the word implies—*dramatic*.

Shooting, stabbing, a ride for life, leaping over precipices, hair-breadth escapes, crime, violence, death and sensational "stunts" are not to be construed as truly dramatic, unless classed as melodramatic. Heart-interest plays, sorrow and joy, jealousy and hatred, love and purity, all enter into the true dramatic story. The dramatic story is but a part of the writer's imagination of life and what it is. The significance that must be welded to the plot-germ and action but bespeaks the power of the play itself. A thing that has a direct connection, coming unexpectedly, with the theme of the play as it is introduced is just that element that makes the story dramatic. The thing or element takes form just as the modeler presses his clay into a definite shape. The modeler knows what he is expected to make from a lump of clay, and sets out to do it.

*Modeling the Dramatic.*

The dramatic writer takes his dramatic thought, eyeing in the distance the approach of that element that is to make the story effective, and works toward it, just as the modeler works to attain that after which he patterns. Every thought and idea is not convertible into photoplays. Added to idea, of course, is the writer's own power of dramatic and plot creation. It is the author of the dramatic story that must give expression to his characters, plot and story. The idea alone is worthless. It is the writer of the plot that must live with and become a part of his characters to make them understood and loved or disliked by the spectators.

In the dramatic story, the new writer must know that plot is the essential, followed by the technique and business that are combined to give the story expression, but that in it all, the other elements are subordinated to plot. In writing the dramatic photoplay, the author must know that it differs from the legitimate because expression and effect can be attained by dialogue in the latter, but by action only in the former. The suspicions that creep into a story are better understood by the writer than by the audience, but to have them known and *felt* by the audience, for which the story is expressly written, the author must reveal them, either quickly or slowly, in a manner that will not sacrifice unexpectedness nor yet fully satisfy

expectancy. The combination of action, business and plot (which means simply the proper appliance of technique) must not be forgotten. Plot alone fails to convince, when there is no *action* to explain and no *business* to show its intent.

### *Effective Dramatic Elements.*

The effective elements of the dramatic story have been given before, and must not be overlooked—emotion, suspense and situation. Only by the weaving and interweaving of these elements can the play become a drama. In opening a dramatic story, a leader may be used to tell what has gone before, or it must be opened with a delicate touch of the dramatic that the intent and motive have been announced in the title and in such a manner as to be readily grasped by the audience. The new writer *must know* that the audience *never sees the synopsis*, therefore, the play must be written, unraveled and the situations created so the *audience knows* what the story is about.

### *The Vital Spot Story.*

There can be no stronger dramatic subject than that of a mother's love, more strongly dramatic when she must hide a broken heart behind a mask of pretended happiness when her son goes from her heart and home, becoming but the scapegrace pal of thieves and criminals. In the dramatic photoplay given below, watch the introduction, the leading up to the "vital

spot" of the story, the full unwinding of the author's plot, the effective situations, the crises—the "punch," and most of all, follow carefully the dramatic points, the sequence and unity with which the play is brought smoothly to its end.

*The One-Reel Dramatic Story.*

"A MOTHER'S TRUST."

By Russell E. Smith. —

(Produced by the Majestic Film Co.)

CAST.

<i>The Mother.</i>	<i>Keene, the philanthropist.</i>
<i>Her Son.</i>	<i>The crook, maid, etc.</i>

SYNOPSIS.

A poor old mother has a scapegrace son whose drinking and gambling habits break her heart, although she strives mightily to lead her boy aright. But he will not stay home at night and travels with a tough mob, one of whom finally leads him into a robbery. The one they plan to rob is a wealthy man, whose philanthropy is well known. Invited to come to see him, the boy goes to see Keene, but only to get the lay of the land for he and his pal, who plan to rob his house. The boy and his crook pal later go to the man's house to rob and the boy waits in the hall, standing guard, while his pal investigates the safe, etc. The crook carries a thirty-eight caliber gun, while Keene has a thirty-two in his desk; while the burglar is looking over the place, Keene enters the room, surprises the burglar, who fires on him, and is in turn shot and killed by Keene. The latter is mortally wounded, the shots that wound him also knocking his gun out of his hand, and he is thus forced to use the dead burglar's gun with which to protect himself against the boy, who enters on the run. Keene mortally wounds the boy and then falls dead himself. The boy, trying to get away, feels he is dying and thinks of mother. The maid enters the doorway and is frightened on account of the shots and dare not approach the room. The boy, realizing that he is done for, crawls back to the room, *places the burglar's gun back in his hands, crawls to the side of Keene, and the police, and particularly the mother, are led to believe that the boy was killed by the burglar while defending his benefactor.*

*The Action.***LEADER.**      **THE MOTHER AND HER SCAPEGRACE SON.**

1. **POOR ROOM.**  
Mother working—sewing. Boy in—demands money. Old mother refuses. Boy demands angrily; she starts to count out a few coins; he takes the whole business and off, leaving mother weeping, etc.
2. **STREET.**  
Boy out and off.
3. **ROOM.**  
Mother sewing again.
4. **SALOON.**  
Boy on and in.
5. **INTERIOR SALOON.**  
Boy in—drinks, etc., with boys at table, etc.
6. **EXTERIOR SALOON.**  
Well-dressed man, drunk—on and rambles in.
7. **INTERIOR SALOON.**  
Drunk in—gets drink—displays roll, etc.
8. **CLOSE UP OF BOY, ETC.**  
Boy and gang see roll—they gesture toward it and indicate intention to rob man.
9. **INTERIOR SALOON.**  
Drunk rolls out—boy and gang after.
10. **EXTERIOR SALOON.**  
Drunk on—down alley—boy and gang follow.
11. **ALLEY.**  
Drunk on down alley—boy and gang follow.
12. **ALLEY.**  
Drunk on—boy on with gang and start to do him up; man suddenly rouses himself, grabs boy and holds others off with gun; displays badge, etc. Others get away, all but boy and one other. Officer drags them off.
13. **STREET.**  
Boy and pal dragged off by officer.
14. **AS IN 1.**  
Mother worrying about boy.
15. **INTERIOR POLICE STATION.**  
Boy and pal dragged in by officer.
16. **INTERIOR ANOTHER ROOM.**  
Mother praying; falls asleep tearfully, etc.—fade out.
17. **ROOM.**  
Fade in—mother asleep—up and out. Worries because boy does not come home, etc.—out.
18. **STREET.**  
Mother out—neighbor sorry for her—shows her morning papers which tell of her boy being sent to the

workhouse for six months for robbing a drunk, etc.  
Mother stricken but brave—back to house.

19. ROOM.

Mother in with paper—weeps—prays for her boy,  
etc.—fade out.

LEADER. AT THE END OF HIS SENTENCE.

20. EXTERIOR HOUSE.

Boy on, slouchingly with pal—sullen, etc., into house.  
Pal waits. Boy tells him he will get coin.

21. AS IN 1.

Boy in—mother greets him—he angry—demands  
money, etc. She has been sewing and gives him coins.  
Mother glad he is back and asks him not to go to  
the saloon and the gang again. She pleads with him,  
but he shakes her off and leaves. She is unhappy and  
worried—back to sewing.

22. EXTERIOR HOUSE.

Boy out and away with pal.

23. STREET CORNER.

Gang hanging about.

24. STREET.

Boy and pal on and off.

25. CORNER.

Boy and pal on—greet gang, etc. All into saloon.

26. SALOON.

Boy and pals in—drink, etc.

LEADER. THE PHILANTHROPIST TRIES TO REFORM THE MEN  
BY OFFERING THEM WORK.

27. STREET BY SALOON.

Keene on.

28. SALOON.

Boy and gang out.

29. EXTERIOR SALOON.

Boy and gang on—Keene on—talks to them—gives  
boy and gang card—tells them to come and sees them  
off—boy and gang laugh—one of the gang draws boy  
aside—they go aside.

30. CLOSE UP BY CORNER.

Boy to gangman—close up of card shown with  
Keene's name and address on—gang—man tells boy,  
*"Go see this guy, pretend to be anxious for a job—  
and get the lay of the place—and we'll crack the  
joint, see!"* Boy doesn't want to, but finally con-  
sents—he is broke, etc., so agrees.

31. CORNER.

Boy off—gangman off.

32. EXTERIOR HOUSE.

Keene on and in.



**33. EXTERIOR TENEMENT.**

Boy on and in.

**34. AS IN 1.**

Boy in—starts to clean hands, etc. Mother wants to know why, etc. Boy shows her card—tells his mother he is going to see Keene about a job—mother happy—kisses boy—boy half-ashamed, but finally hardens, and off. Mother stops him—gives him coin—he takes it—ashamed again, but off—mother prays happily, etc.

**35. EXTERIOR TENEMENT.**

Boy out and off.

**36. AS IN 1.**

Mother happy again, etc.

**37. STUDY.**

Keene at work on papers, etc.

**38. EXTERIOR HOUSE.**

Boy on to door.

**39. INTERIOR HALL.**

Maid to door—opens.

**40. PORCH.**

Boy in.

**41. HALL.**

Boy in—shows card—told to wait; maid off with card.

**42. STUDY.**

Maid in with card—tells Keene boy wants to see him—Keene tells her to bring him in—maid off.

**43. HALL.**

Boy looking things over—gloats, etc. Maid in—takes him in to study.

**44. STUDY.**

Keene up and greets boy—boy pretends to want a job—looks place over—sees safe—looks about, etc. Pretends to faint and needs drink of water—Keene rushes off to get it. Boy looks in desk—finds gun, etc.—keys—takes impression of them—looks at safe, etc.—back to chair.

**45. HALL.**

Keene on with water—off.

**46. STUDY.**

Keene in—gives drink to boy—boy thankful, etc. Keene asks about himself, mother, etc.—Keene tells him he will give her some sewing to do and will also get him a job, etc.—sends him off.

**47. HALL.**

Boy out—looks back gleefully and off.

**48. EXTERIOR HOUSE.**

Boy out and off.

## LATER.

## LEADER.

## THE BOBBERY PLANNED.

49. EXTERIOR HOUSE; NIGHT.  
Boy and crook on—boy takes keys from pocket to door.
50. DOORWAY.  
Boy and crook open door and in.
51. HALL.  
Boy and crook in—boy stands guard with slungshot—crook pulls gun and in.
52. STUDY.  
Crook in—fusses around desk.
53. HALL.  
Boy listening.
54. STUDY.  
Crook knocks over statue.
55. ANTEROOM.  
Keene reading—hears—up and out.
56. HALL.  
Boy hears—worried.
57. STUDY.  
Crook listening—Keene in through curtains—draws gun—shoots at crook, who falls, shooting from floor and dying. His shot knocks gun from Keene's hand and also mortally wounds Keene.
58. HALL.  
Boy hears—in with slungshot.
59. STUDY.  
Keene sees him coming—on floor—grabs crook's gun, which has fallen from crook's hand—shoots boy—then dies—boy falls—drags himself up.
60. HALL.  
Maid on—phones for police.
61. STUDY.  
Boy struggles to door—falls again.
62. HALL.  
Maid phones and hangs up.
63. STUDY.  
Boy realizes he is dying.
64. EXTERIOR POLICE STATION.  
Patrol out and off.
65. STUDY.  
Boy dying realizes his life has been all wrong—*VISIONS OF MOTHER*, etc.—decides to leave a good memory for mother—*drags himself to body of Keene—takes crook's gun from Keene and puts it in crook's hand—puts slungshot in pal's pocket—crawls back to Keene.*

66. STREET.  
Flash of patrol coming.
67. STUDY.  
Boy dies by side of Keene.
68. EXTERIOR HOUSE.  
Patrol on—police out.
69. HALL.  
Maid opens door—police in.
70. STUDY.  
Police in. Detective lights up room—sees crook dead by door and Keene and boy dead by desk—examines gun in crook's hand—finds slungshot, dead boy and Keene, says:
- CUT-IN. "The crook killed them both!"
- BACK TO SCENE.
- LEADER. NEXT DAY. THE DYING MOTHER BELIEVES HER BOY GOOD.
71. AS IN 1.  
Police on to tell mother about boy's death—paper shown her that tells that boy *evidently died to protect his benefactor*, etc.—mother dies happily, etc.—police off—fade out on mother, etc.

### *Relieving the Tension.*

This story is not given as a model after which the new writer might pattern in writing a *high dramatic* subject, but is simply to illustrate the effectiveness of that dramatic element that springs suddenly out of a story at the time when least expected. There has been a tenseness throughout the story that held the audience, and made them wonder and anticipate the end. *Flashes* and *cut-backs* have kept up the suspense, the *business* and *situations* of the various scenes have kept the interest alive and the *crises* and *climax* have given us the true effectiveness of *what plot is* at a time when the audience wants to know—when its tension can be no longer strained. Up to scene twenty-one,

the action has shown but the introduction, what sort of characters we have to deal with and the love of a mother for her wayward son. Then, the boy begins to go downward again and we watch, with fear, his career from now on. The interest increases on the introduction of Keene, and we wonder what part *he* is to have in rejuvenating the boy or if he is to be redeemed. We don't know, because the author leaves us to wonder—that has been his object.

*Getting in the "Punch"*

Then, the robbery is planned. But in scene fifty-four *something happens*. The *business* of the crook knocking the statue over has created a *situation* that has aroused us anew. We are reaching the height at scene fifty-seven, and then our anxiety is somewhat relieved. But we have forgotten the motive of the story. Scene sixty-five awakens us again, and we see the author get in his *punch*. The boy has a spark of goodness, of manhood, left, and he crawls back to Keene, *exchanges guns* and leaves it for the police and dear old mother to *believe he died defending his benefactor*. It's the impression that scene leaves that has made it really dramatic in our minds. We had not looked for the boy to do anything further than just to be naturally dead. But the author saw farther than that—and the impression of the full story resulted; we realized just what the motive was, and we sym-

pathized with the old mother as she closed her eyes believing her son worthy of her love and devotion.

### *A Different Type of Story.*

In "The Fire Jugglers" is found a distinctly different type of the dramatic photoplay, inasmuch as it is less melodramatic—more refined, but containing the necessary "twist" and "punch" which so many scenarios lack. The woman of this story is of the type that is always interesting, and coupled with the plot of the author, she creates all the elements at which the story is aimed—to show her vanity and love of flattery, yielding the love and endearments of her husband to the "murmurings of society" and its devotees. In the character of Alberti, we do not find him new—but we do find an original motive as the plot applies to the story. There is noted a touch of jealousy in the face of Leavitt as he watches his wife in her coquettish mannerisms, but it is not until Major Schmall's medals and title, the singing of Farar and the smiles and flattery of Alberti attract too much of his wife's attention that Leavitt realizes just how far she has gone. And then, Major Schmall in his note to Leavitt renews interest in the story. From here on it involves every character and comes to a crisis and close in a way we had not anticipated, mingling heart-interest, sympathy and justice in a logical, well-defined manner, pleasing and entirely satisfying

us. Study this story closely, carefully; dissect it, rebuild it, and you will learn to know, as in "A Mother's Trust," just what is meant by the *dramatic plot story*.

**"THE FIRE JUGGLERS."**

By William E. Wing.

(Produced by the Selig Polyscope Co.)

CAST.

*Leavitt*  
*Mrs. Leavitt*  
*Signor Alberti*  
*Major Schmall*  
*Detectives*  
*Model*  
*Farar*

SYNOPSIS.

Mrs. Leavitt is a type which is common in society. Catering to anyone who will flatter her, she falls a prey to the charms of Farar, a tenor, and Signor Alberti, an artist, who proves to be Gloto, a clever blackmailing Italian. Alberti and Mrs. Leavitt get the consent of her husband to allow the Italian to paint a portrait, which he does almost in the nude and then demands ten thousand dollars from Leavitt. In the meanwhile, Major Schmall, a friend of Leavitt, communicates with the Italian police and learns of Alberti's blackmailing career. On receipt of a note from the artist, Leavitt goes to see the picture. Alberti has for his companion a model, the two working together to fleece the rich of their money. Alberti covers the picture with a drapery, he having "faked" the nude part of the picture as a ruse to compel Leavitt to pay blackmail. Leavitt's wrath is intense, and as he reaches for the painting, the artist pulls a revolver. A struggle follows in which a hole is shot through the picture. Major Schmall, with Italian and American detectives, arrest the model and proceed to Alberti's studio just as Leavitt is about to end the artist's life. Alberti is arrested and with the model is taken to jail. Leavitt takes the picture to his home, where in trembling fear he compels his wife to look upon it. She loses her vanity and tears the jewels from her hair, and in a spasm of hysteria pleads with her husband. He understands she has learned an object lesson and tenderly places his arm about her.

*The Action.*

- Scene 1. INTERIOR MRS. LEAVITT'S FASHIONABLE DRESSING ROOM WITH THREE MIRRORS—ONE ON DRESSER, TWO PEDESTAL MIRRORS AT SIDES.**

Mrs. Leavitt, young, vain, few brains, is in fancy dressing gown, seated before mirror. Maid, near, has just concluded dressing madam's hair. Madam looks at herself admiringly in the glasses. Leavitt, the husband, society type, older than wife, comes unnoticed, frowns at scene; face clears and he forces a smile as she turns to him and puts up cheek for kiss. She immediately turns back to admiration of herself, trying effect of jewels in hair. Leavitt, impatient with the display of vanity, turns and goes. Maid brings reception gown to madam.

- Scene 2. LIBRARY LEAVITT'S FINE HOME.**  
Leavitt comes frowning, finds Schmall, German gentleman, military type, waiting. They greet each other heartily—walk from room.

- Scene 3. LAWN, FINE HOME, NEAR FLOWER BED.**  
Leavitt and Schmall come. German is interested in roses. Cut.

- Scene 4. VERANDA LEAVITT'S FINE HOME.**  
Mrs. Leavitt, gown and auto coat, comes, looks yonder in grounds, face brightens. She hastens that way.

**LEADER.** MAJOR SCHMALL'S TITLE AND MEDALS OF HONOR  
SET THE VAIN MRS. LEAVITT IN A FLUTTER.

- Scene 5. BACK TO LEAVITT AND SCHMALL ON LAWN IN 3.**

Mrs. Leavitt joins the gentlemen and is introduced to Major Schmall. Husband excuses himself. Mrs. Leavitt is coquettish. She sees the medals under major's coat, stands close to him, handles them and looks up into his eyes. He is displeased with her actions. He registers that husband yonder is calling. She takes his arm, unasked, and they go, Mrs. Leavitt talking vivaciously and leaning on his arm.

- Scene 6. DRIVEWAY IN LEAVITT'S YARD.**  
Leavitt and auto waiting. Major and Mrs. Leavitt come, enter the machine and the three exit.

**LEADER.** SIGNOR ALBERTI, THE PORTRAIT PAINTER, HAS BECOME THE RAGE OF SOCIETY.

**Scene 7.** INTERIOR STUDIO OF SIGNOR ALBERTI, EASEL IN FOREGROUND, TABLE NEAR, DAIS FOR POSING AT LEFT, BACKGROUND, PICTURES ON WALLS, ETC.

Signor Alberti, ready for guests, is talking with his model, young and shapely. They hear guests coming. He kisses her. She hurries out rear door. Alberti at foreground door admits gushing women. Cut.

**Scene 8.** CURBING IN FRONT CLUB—CAMERA IN STREET SHOWING CLUBHOUSE IN BACKGROUND.

Leavitt, wife and major come in auto. They descend. Mrs. Leavitt attempts to attach herself to major, who quietly moves to other side of Leavitt. Mrs. Leavitt pouts. They enter building.

**Scene 9.** BACK TO INTERIOR STUDIO AS IN 7.

Alberti is showing enthusiastic guests portraits when Mr. and Mrs. Leavitt and Major Schmall enter. Alberti hastens to greet them, especially Mrs. Leavitt, the artist's specialty being brainless women. Major Schmall starts when he sees artist. The two men are greeted by the women present and turn away. Alberti takes Mrs. Leavitt aside. Cut.

**Scene 10.** CORNER SAME STUDIO AS 9.

Alberti comes, flatters Mrs. Leavitt, who is pleased with his compliments. She listens with eyes downcast, raises them until she gazes into his eyes. Cut.

**Scene 11.** CUT BACK TO STUDIO GROUP AS IN 9.

Group all chatting but Major Schmall, who is looking toward corner where Alberti and Mrs. Leavitt are talking. Cut.

**CUT-IN.** "Ah, madam is so beautiful! To paint her portrait would give me happiness!"

**Scene 12.** CUT BACK TO CORNER OF STUDIO IN 10.

Alberti is gushing over the responsive madam; would like to paint her portrait. She bows assent.

**Scene 13.** BACK TO THE STUDIO AND MAJOR IN 11.

He frowns, is tempted to speak to the husband near, refrains and ponders. Mrs. Leavitt comes with Alberti excitedly, asks husband's permission to have artist paint her portrait. Hus-



band consents. Major studies Alberti's face. The trio goes.

**Scene 14. LEAVITT'S AUTO AT CLUB CURBING AS IN 8.**

Mr. and Mrs. Leavitt and major come. Major refuses to drive with them. Auto and Leavitts go. Major, perturbed, gazes after them, then at clubhouse—goes.

**LEADER.** "THESE FOOLISH RICH SHALL BE MADE TO RECUPERATE OUR DEPLETED FUNDS."

**Scene 15. BACK TO STUDIO INTERIOR.**

Last of guests just going. Alberti, with smile of triumph on face, turns as model enters room from rear door. She goes to him eagerly and inquires. He nods that he has been successful. She throws her arms about his neck. He says words of leader.

**Scene 16. CORNER MAJOR'S ROOM, WITH WRITING DESK.**

Major has just completed a letter, is reading inside page:

**INSERT. SECOND PAGE OF WRITTEN LETTER.**

Am sure he is Gloto, the clever black-mailing artist whose picture I saw in a Naples newspaper. Inform the authorities of Rome at once.

Your friend,

MAJ. KARL SCHMALL.

**BACK TO SCENE.**

Major much satisfied with his letter; goes with it.

**LEADER.** THE FIRST SITTING.

**Scene 17. INTERIOR STUDIO, CLOSE TO DAIS.**

Alberti is arranging Mrs. Leavitt's pose, flattering her meantime. She drinks it in. He has her recline and put head on hand which is on pillow, arranges her loose hair over shoulders and body. She is puzzled. He tells her it is a beautiful pose. She smiles up at him again. He retreats to easel.

**Scene 18. STUDIO INTERIOR WITH CAMERA BEHIND PAINTER, SHOWING DAIS AND MRS. LEAVITT IN BACKGROUND.**

Alberti comes and begins to block in head. Cut.

**Scene 19. EXTERIOR, REAR DOOR TO STUDIO.**

Model peeps in crack of door, smiles scornfully.

LEADER.

AFTER MADAM HAS GONE.

Scene 20. STUDIO INTERIOR.

Alberti bows Mrs. Leavitt out, signals and model comes. She is bare-footed and bare-shouldered, covered with single drape to give hint of nude pose which she is supposed to do. Alberti signifies door through which their victim has just gone, then head of Mrs. Leavitt, blocked out on canvas. Both laugh sneeringly. They go to dais. Cut.

Scene 21. DAIS IN REAR OF STUDIO.

Artist and model come. He spreads her hair. She begins to remove drape, exposing upper portion of naked body. Cut.

Scene 22. CUT BACK TO CLOSE-UP OF EASEL WITH CANVAS OF MRS. LEAVITT'S HEAD BLOCKED IN.

Alberti comes, cunning look on face, and sits; begins to work and talk to model. Cut.

Scene 23. CUT BACK TO MODEL ON DAIS FROM REAR, CLOSE UP, SHOWING ONLY HER HEAD AND BARE SHOULDERS COVERED BY LOOSE HAIR, AFTER POSE BY MRS. LEAVITT.

Scene 24. BACK TO EASEL IN 22, SHOWING ARTIST AT WORK AND OUTLINE OF NUDE BLOCKED ONTO DRAWN HEAD OF MRS. LEAVITT.

Alberti laughs heartily.

LEADER.

NEXT IS FARAR, THE GREAT FRENCH TENOR.

Scene 25. SIDEWALK WITH PARK IN BACKGROUND. Farar, tenor and conceited, struts past, enjoying bows of admiring women, is called from curbing yonder, looks that way, removes hat and hastens forward.

Scene 26. CURBING AT PARK.

Mrs. Leavitt is leaning eagerly from her auto. Farar comes, bows low. She gives him both hands gushingly. He kisses them. Mr. Leavitt comes. Madam sinks back, rather abashed. The conceited tenor greets Mr. Leavitt with a bow, receiving a cold nod. Leavitt enters auto, which goes. Mrs. Leavitt peeps back at the bowing Farar.

Scene 27. LIBRARY IN LEAVITT'S HOME AS IN 2. Leavitt enters, hat in hand. Maid hands him note. He reads:

**INSERT. NOTE IN FOREIGN HANDWRITING.**

Signor Leavitt: Your Wife's *portrait* is finished. I would advise bringing \$10,000. Come alone. You will understand.

**ALBERTI.**

Leavitt is puzzled, frowns—impulse to go to his wife upstairs—takes hat and leaves house.

**LEADER.** AN ITALIAN DETECTIVE WITH A MISSION.

**Scene 28. EXTERIOR POLICE STATION.**

Italian detective with American detective emerge. American points the way. They go.

**Scene 29. ALBERTI'S STUDIO, CLOSE TO EASEL WHICH HAS COVERED PICTURE ON IT.**

Alberti, smiling craftily, hears knock; brings in the wondering and rather grim Leavitt, who looks at the covered canvas and steps toward it. Alberti, showing teeth in a malicious smile, stops him, takes the cloth. Cloth comes off in Alberti's hands. Nude painting of Mrs. Leavitt. Leavitt steps back in amazement. Cut.

**Scene 30. STREET.**

Alberti's model passes, followed by Italian and American detectives.

**LEADER.** "IT MAY BE, AS SIGNOR SAYS, A 'FAKE.' BUT WHO WILL BELIEVE IT?"

**Scene 31. CUT BACK TO STUDIO AS IN 29.**

Alberti, with sneering smile, watches Leavitt, who is tense in his wrath. He reaches for the canvas, but is thrown back by the watchful artist who pulls gun. Alberti points gun at Leavitt and they are posed tensely at the cut. Cut.

**Scene 32. STREET.**

Model passes followed by the two detectives.

**LEADER.** "DESTROY IT AND I CAN PAINT ANOTHER!"

**Scene 33. BACK TO STUDIO AS IN 31.**

Alberti sneeringly tells Leavitt he can paint another, patting his right arm which holds gun. Leavitt, in rage, hits weapon, which shoots hole in picture. Leavitt seizes the artist and the struggle is on for ten feet. Cut.

**Scene 34. SIDEWALK ENTRANCE TO CLUB AS IN 8.**

Model, closely followed by detectives, turns in. Italian detective seizes her. American detective holds her. Italian enters building.

**Scene 35. BACK TO FIGHT INTERIOR STUDIO AS IN 33.**

Struggle continues, wrecking interior studio as in 33. Leavitt forces artist to the table and throws him over table from opposite side camera; twists artist's right arm as he masters him. Artist's face comes over table, distended with torture, until eyes stare into camera. Leavitt, sudden rage in face, tells victim his arm is going to break, begins to twist it. Cut.

**Scene 36. EXTERIOR DOOR OF STUDIO.**

Italian detective comes, hears fight, hurls himself into room.

**Scene 37. BACK TO BATTLE IN STUDIO AS IN 35.**

Leavitt, battle-scarred and breathless, backs from his victim on the table, animal rage in his face. The artist, in great pain, rolls from table and falls to floor as Italian detective rushes in, looks at Leavitt, then at writhing figure on floor, seizes latter, raises him and exhibits badge. Alberti shrinks, wildly gazes at the detective, whom he recognizes. Detective takes him and goes, followed by Leavitt.

**LEADER.** "THEY WILL HARM SOCIETY NO MORE."

**Scene 38. CUT BACK TO AMERICAN DETECTIVE AND MODEL, EXTERIOR CLUB AS IN 34.**

Italian detective comes with Alberti. Leavitt follows with picture covered by scarf. Italian detective tells him the precious pair are going to jail. They separate.

**Scene 39. INTERIOR MRS. LEAVITT'S DRESSING ROOM AS IN 1.**

She is admiring the jewels in her hair and gown she has just donned, sees photo on screen, picks it up (flash of Farar's photo on screen), admires it, sees self in glass, throws kiss at her reflection, turns suddenly as Leavitt, mussed by the fight and with covered picture, comes. She is alarmed at his grim appearance, creeps towards him. He shows back of picture and bullet hole, drops it face down on floor, tells her to look at it and come to him in library in five minutes, goes, leaving her staring and frightened. She fears to take picture up, forces herself to raise it, drops it and covers her eyes. Cut.

- Scene 40. LIBRARY AS IN 2.**  
Leavitt, dressing coat and clean collar, comes grimly, looks at watch and waits. Cut.
- Scene 41. BACK TO MRS. LEAVITT IN 39.**  
She is crouched on floor beside picture, sobbing; rises, reels as she looks in mirror, destroys Farar's photo, tears jewels from hair, begins to tear dress. Cut.
- Scene 42. BACK TO LIBRARY AND LEAVITT WAITING AS IN 40.**  
Paces library.
- Scene 43. EXTERIOR LIBRARY DOOR.**  
Mrs. Leavitt, hair done simply, in simple black dress, comes fearfully, looks at door, spasm of hysteria overtakes her. She puts arms on door and head on arms. Door begins to swing open.
- Scene 44. BACK TO LIBRARY IN 42, NEAR DOOR.**  
Leavitt, arms folded, coldly waiting, door swinging open slowly with Mrs. Leavitt sobbing against it. As it opens she sinks to the floor. He stands waiting. Sobbing, she draws herself to her knees, holding to him. Then, upright, swaying before him, makes her humble plea. As *FADEOUT* begins, his face softens slightly and his arm begins to move about her shoulder.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE PLOTLESS STORY

**T**HE majority of writers are unable to distinguish between what is plot and what is not. Time after time, they submit their stories, believing their work to be equal to that of any successful writer, many trying to delude themselves into thinking that favoritism plays the most important part in the acceptance of the stories of other writers. Plot is what the editor and director seek—no matter from whence it comes.

The author of this book has read several thousand photoplay manuscripts, the stories of professionals and of amateurs, and while it is pleasing to note, many times, the careful and exact technique applied to many plays, it is inexpressibly disappointing to discover them entirely void of plot. Technique, while an important element in the writing of scenarios, is like a beautiful cover on a book in which there is nothing of interest—simply a record of incidents flavored with the essence of rhetoric and metaphors that make the story somewhat pleasing, but not popular; perhaps delicately written, but lacking the intense, gripping interest a popular book should have—it does not create demand.

*Plays Without Plots.*

"But how am I to know when I have a plot?" an amateur asks. The answer comes from the studio only—when it is accepted. Then let that class of writers study and compare "The Dramatic Plot-Story" with "The Plotless Story," and the difference will at once be discernible—it will stand out, because the story in this chapter contains *no plot*, while those in the previous chapter *do* contain it. There is absolutely nothing in "Three-Fingered Jack" to arouse interest, suspicion, awaken emotion, create suspense, bring out action or to cause wonder as to the climax—nothing of real comedy or of drama—just a simple story to which has been applied an excellent technique. But technique fails to sell the story.

Such a story as "Three-Fingered Jack" might be worked into a fairly good piece of fiction, but it has no dramatic qualities in its present form. But *plot could be woven into it*. There are several places where excellent *situations* and pieces of *business* and *action* could be written into it; it could be made into a story *with plot*, while in its present shape, it *lacks plot*.

*Good Technique, But—*

Follow it closely, see how nicely and smoothly it is worked up, with perfect sequency and unity, with leaders and cut-ins properly placed and leading right up to the end, but notice, too, that it is too short, its only weak

technical part, and that in its plot it is so slight that it would be immediately marked in the studio "Unavailable."

**"THREE-FINGERED JACK."**

**CAST.**

*Three-Fingered Jack.* "Graveyard Trail" Innkeeper  
*Weiss*.....Village smith and joker  
*Squibb*.....Village cut-up  
*Smith*.....Village cripple  
*Matilda, Smith's Sister*.....The "ghost"  
*Miller*.....Young farmer, "joker"  
*Supernumeraries, men and women, old and young;*  
*appearing in harvest-time, costumes*  
*of rural district, etc., etc.*

**SYNOPSIS.**

"Three-Fingered Jack," athletic son of the wilderness, and steeped deeply in the dissipations of the backwoods of half a century ago, is keeper of the "Graveyard Trail Inn." He meets death at the hands of unknowns; his ending is a mystery never solved. Fifty years after his death, three village jokers are brought together in a harvest field. A plot is hatched whereby Smith, a one-legged fellow, is to be presented with a cork leg by popular subscription, but he is first to be made the victim of a joke which has for its basis the appearance of the ghost of "Three-Fingered Jack," who had but three fingers on his right hand, and whose inn sign was a mug encircled by three fingers. Smith's keen-witted sister hears the scheme planned and turns the success of the joke into disaster for the jokers. The ghost of "Three-Fingered Jack" appears before them and their mirth is turned to fright, her brother gets his cork leg, but not by popular subscription, the girl outwitting the jokers at every turn and compelling them to furnish the leg out of their own pocket, much to the amusement of the villagers and to the chagrin of the jokers.

**SCENARIO.**

**Scene 1. INTERIOR "GRAVEYARD TRAIL INN;" NIGHT.**

Liquor has the better of "Jack" as he serves drinks to village characters, bar seen on one side of room—villagers exit, bidding "Jack" good-night. "Jack" nearly asleep on feet.



**Scene 2. EXTERIOR "GRAVEYARD TRAIL INN;" NIGHT TINT.**

Villagers come out door, some taking horses and leaving, others going afoot. As they exit, two rough-looking characters peer around corner of inn, then come out in plain view; discuss something excitedly.

**Scene 3. AS IN SCENE 1.**

"Jack" detects low hum of voices outside, staggers to bar till, takes out money, places in bag, hides in old-fashioned fireplace, takes gun and peers out window.

**Scene 4. AS IN SCENE 2.**

Rough-looking characters nearing inn entrance. "Jack" seen in window, raises gun to fire. Intruders open fire as they back from scene, covering faces to hide identity. "Jack" seen to fall back, but still aims and fires; all characters from Scene 1 enter hurriedly, some enter inn, others stand mystified, asking questions.

**Scene 5. AS IN SCENE 1.**

"Jack" on floor dead. Villagers enter, examine body, discuss murder, a mystery. Other villagers enter.

**LEADER. FIFTY YEARS LATER. VILLAGE JOKERS PLOT TO SCARE CRIPPLED JOHN SMITH.**

**Scene 6. EXTERIOR, OPEN FIELD.**

Threshing machine seen. Squibb and Miller tinker with machine; it's out of order. Weiss enters, tools in hand, repairs machine, the three get heads together, indicating joke being laid; as Squibb points eastward, they talk together. Smith enters.

**Scene 7. EXTERIOR, REAR THRESHING MACHINE. Matilda discovered, listening to jokers' plans.**

**LEADER. A NEW CORK LEG IS PROPOSED BY POPULAR SUBSCRIPTION.**

**BACK TO SCENE.**

Plan pleases the cripple, jokers wink at each other and all exit as Matilda enters from side, indicating she has not heard plot hatched.

**CUT in LEADER. THE CRIPPLE'S SISTER TAKES A HAND.**

**BACK TO SCENE.**

Matilda vows to frustrate jokers' plans, slips quietly from scene.

**Scene 8. AS IN 6.**

Squibb, Miller and Weiss talking, laugh heartily as Smith enters scene, greetings.

**LEADER.** THE STORY OF "THREE-FINGERED JACK."

**Scene 9. INTERIOR WEISS' BLACKSMITH SHOP; DAY.**

Villagers crowd about Weiss as he tells story of "Jack's" ghost, describing how "Jack" was mysteriously slain.

**CUT-IN LEADER.**

INVESTIGATION WILL BE MADE OF  
HAUNTED INN.

**BACK TO SCENE.**

Villagers agree to "investigate" inn, as Weiss, Miller and Squibb wink at each other, jab each others' ribs in glee. Cripple John Smith shows fright. Weiss goes to him, whispers to him. Smith takes off wooden leg, holds it up, indicating "I can't run if the ghost comes." Others persuade him to accompany them. Matilda peers into shop, gets drift of things and withdraws head, nodding knowingly.

**LEADER.**

THAT NIGHT.

**Scene 10. AS IN SCENE 1.**

Old inn shows signs of decay. Matilda enters cautiously, softly closes door, glances around somewhat frightened, has sack thrown over shoulder, drops sack, gazes about, takes white sheet from sack and wraps it about her person; spies old gun behind bar as she moves about, handles gun carefully, takes small box from her pocket and rubs phosphorous on three fingers, hears noise, hides behind bar as Weiss enters carrying large sack, he gazes about, drops sack, opens and takes out white sheet, strings of bells, large hand bells, chains, etc., etc. Matilda nervously watches him, makes slight noise. Weiss is frightened, but determines to proceed, puts on white sheet, takes bells and chains and climbs up ladder into attic.

**Scene 11. EXTERIOR VILLAGE STREET; NIGHT TINT.**

Miller and Squibb enjoy joke. Other villagers enter. Cripple Smith comes. "Where's Weiss?" is question of Miller, with nod to Squibb.

**Scene 12. AS IN SCENE 1.**

Matilda puts head above bar, then disappears. Weiss peeps down from opening in ceiling, then disappears. Moon-effect in room.

**Scene 13. AS IN SCENE 2.**

Signs of decay noted, sign of "Graveyard Trail Inn" seen about to fall from above door. All

persons from Scene 8 enter. Cripple Smith still afraid. Miller, Squibb and Smith are to enter inn. Other villagers urge them on; they enter, Smith being almost dragged, as others enjoy joke.

**Scene 14. AS IN SCENE 1.**

Squibb, Miller and Smith enter; are just discernible as they move about. Squibb and Miller hunt for clubs for defense; one suggests Smith's wooden leg. He is compelled to take it off and hold it in hand. All three seated on floor, Smith lays leg down, Squibb carefully pulls it away from him. Miller arises, ascends ladder a few feet and listens; hears awful sounds; Squibb and Smith hear them. Miller and Squibb hastily exit. Smith helpless, as Squibb takes wooden leg along. Weiss comes down ladder, frightening Smith all the more; shakes chains, rings bells. Matilda peeps above bar. Weiss reaches floor, begins to crawl toward Smith, now prostrate on floor. Matilda places her three fingers about old mug, places mug on bar, making noise to attract Weiss. Three fingers show up plainly. Weiss thinks it is real ghost of "Jack." Matilda rises to feet, showing hideous face and traditional figure of "Three-Fingered Jack." Matilda raises gun, points it at Weiss, who is so frightened he can hardly get to door, flees in panic. Matilda tosses off sheet and laughs, then remembers brother on floor and rushes to him, makes him understand; she dons white sheet, grabs gun and disappears out of door.

**Scene 15. EXTERIOR, VILLAGE GRAVEYARD; NIGHT TINT.**

Villagers from Scene 9 enjoy joke. They hear noise, look eastward, show fright, then all disappear as Weiss, in sheet and carrying chains and bells, rushes into scene. Weiss is badly frightened and wants villagers to wait. Looks backward, sees ghost of "Jack" (Matilda) coming fast, exits hurriedly as Matilda enters. She stops and enjoys situation.

**Scene 16. AS IN SCENE 6.**

Weiss tremblingly explains to companions about ghost in inn. Others now believe in real ghost, all indicate fright. Squibb holds up Smith's wooden leg. All fear now for Smith's safety; look up street and see ghost

(Matilda) coming. Squibb drops wooden leg and all hurriedly exit as Matilda enters, spies brother's leg, picks it up and exits.

Scene 17. AS IN SCENE 1.

Smith lies on floor, gropes about. Matilda enters, tells him how she scared all others; both enjoy it. She has idea. "Here, put on the leg, then take it off when we get to the blacksmith shop, where the jokers are." Brother puts on leg and both depart, as girl tosses gun, sheet, etc., behind her.

Scene 18. AS IN SCENE 9; NIGHT.

Weiss, Squibb and Miller excitedly discuss ghost. They now believe in real ghost without a doubt. Fire from forge lights up immediate space and reflections show in all three faces.

Scene 19. EXTERIOR BLACKSMITH SHOP; NIGHT TINT.

Matilda and brother enter quietly, listen at door. "Yes, they're in there," she whispers to brother. She tells him to take wooden leg off, which he does. She hides it under apron as she advises him to hide at side of building. He hobbles to side as she opens door and enters.

Scene 20. AS IN SCENE 9.

Weiss, Squibb and Miller show embarrassment and fright as Matilda enters.

CUT-IN.

"WHERE'S MY BROTHER?"

BACK TO SCENE.

Tense situation for three men. Matilda produces brother's wooden leg, lays it on forge and demands explanation; says words of cut-in. Men are confused, nervous, almost dumb; Matilda threatens, demands they buy brother new cork leg; they agree, each contributes, girl satisfied and exits, smile on face as men hang heads and tremble.

LEADER.

A WEEK LATER.

Scene 21. EXTERIOR, VILLAGE STREET; DAY.

Weiss, Squibb and Miller want others who enjoyed original joke to "chip in" to pay for Smith's new cork leg, which the three men had to buy. Villagers refuse and have laugh on three. Matilda and brother enter together, Smith walking with air of big man. They stop, Matilda pulls up brother's pant leg, showing new cork leg, pulls old wooden leg from under

apron, points to Weiss, Squibb and Miller, saying, "They paid for it." Others laugh at discomfiture of three as Matilda and brother exit. Weiss, Squibb and Miller can stand thrusts and taunts no longer and depart opposite way as companions enjoy situation.

This is the class of story returned by the studio because of its being *too slight in plot, too commonplace, lacks action, no interest, lacks climax, no suspense, no dramatic qualities, too short, no life in it*. The new writer should study it well, for it is the *unavailable story of the average amateur*.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE PRODUCTS OF OBSERVATION.

**O**BSERVATION creates inspiration and from it imagination and interest come. The dreamer may build beautiful air castles without touching upon the mental index of his own individuality or drawing from his own storehouse of imagination, but observation will go further than that, for the careful observer will find every incident, idea, theme and message that may become the foundation of a successful photoplay. Inspiration may be the birth of the idea, but observation takes the story from the theoretical standpoint and puts it into the real. The observing mind will find information at every hand; incidents will be discovered, plots revealed, entanglements discerned, love will be found, hatred detected and hidden sympathy will be discovered, all of which may be only the starting point or idea that may be developed into a photoplay story. Primarily, inspiration is the well-spring of many an idea, but the faculty upon which imagination and plot are built is observation.

#### *Value of Observation.*

The observing reporter holds his position, the unobserving reporter does not; the observ-

ing photoplaywright is able to catch ideas, themes, incident and occurrences that are woven into photoplay stories; the unobserving mind forfeits all of this and in their place writes commonplace, conventional things. It is neither necessary nor compulsory that one learn the science of deduction to be observing. A young man goes into the advertising department of a newspaper office. He writes out an advertisement for a position, indicating that he is out of work and that he will take any kind of a job. The observing man behind the desk will say, "You were working at the Brown Machinery Company, weren't you?" The man nods affirmatively, pays for his advertisement and passes out, wondering how the man behind the desk guessed at his vocation. It was no guess work, it was simply observation, because the man's fingernails were spotted with a peculiar oil, the backs of his hands were smooth while the palms were hardened. The man's vocation was thus indicated by his hands, but the ventured statement regarding the Brown Machinery Company was guess work. There is no story here, no plot, no interest; it simply indicates what observation may do.

### *Finding a Plot-Germ.*

A railroad engineer went into a restaurant and sat down at a table at which was sitting an office man. The engineer's work was shown by his blouse, cap and overalls in which there was nothing apparently strange. In ordering his

dinner he selected buttermilk as a drink and during the meal he drank three large glasses of the lactic fluid. The office man sitting at the same table drank coffee and complained of dyspepsia. A third man entered and sat at the same table and a general conversation followed. The third man was a writer, an observer. He noticed the dyspeptic and he observed the healthy look on the engineer's face. He transferred the engineer's personality to the dyspeptic, around which he built a buttermilk story. The writer observed that the buttermilk was responsible for the health of the engineer. The observation gave way to inspiration and the message that followed was a photoplay comedy on the use of buttermilk, which story has been produced and released; but to many people there would be nothing uncommon in the fact that two men sat at a restaurant table, one man drinking buttermilk and the other coffee.

### *Studying by Observation.*

A scene at a small country railroad station. A traveling man, an observer, looks out the window and notices an old lady and a beautiful girl on the platform; on their faces is written expectancy. The traveler looks about the car and sees that no one was leaving the station at this point, and as the train pulls out he observed that the old lady had broken down and was sobbing on the shoulder of the girl. An everyday occurrence one may think, but the ob-



server in the car window saw further. He saw there the story of a wayward son who had gone to the city years before; he read in the mother's eyes the story of an aching heart and in the girl's face he observed the lovelight that would not die, out of which observation came a beautiful story, first by *observation*, then by *inspiration*.

*The Instigator of Ideas.*

The observer relies on the outside things obtained for his material. His atmosphere and environment he creates; the observer can develop these whether it be on the sea or in the mountains. He knows how to invent obstacles and how to keep away from excuses. His observation teaches him the difference between affectation and naturalness and he can distinguish between genuine love and pretense. Inspiration may overlook such points of interest; observation, in its naturalness, never.

Observation, in building character, is a wonderful instructor. Enter a street car at some point before the car becomes crowded and observe the passengers, their frowns and smiles, manners and general carriage. Number one is an overly fat little Jewess, black hair and flashing eyes, wearing colors that would make an East Indian envious. There is a cynical smile on her face as she is caught reading the advertisements in the car; all at once her eyes become riveted upon certain placard. Observe the smile disappear and note the frown that

takes its place. She studies the card and the expression on her face denotes chagrin and disappointment, indicating that she had not got value for her money in her purchase at the store whose advertisement she was reading. Next to her sits a dapper young man whose carelessness denotes his entire lack of responsibility. His morning paper is opened at the sporting page; his interest is depicted on his face as he absorbs the comment of the sporting editor. His life seems to go no further, his wishes and desires, his ambitions, all end on the baseball field and the observer knows that the first stop he will make will be at the downtown corner cigar store. In the middle of the car, hanging to a strap, is a sad-faced little woman whose plainness of dress and facial expression show her laborious life. Her eyes speak of sorrow and despair and the observer will probably discern the reason of her sadness. The woman stares as if in a dream of the past, a dream, perhaps, of a home gone from her! she may be looking into the future afraid to tread the untried paths, but refinement is seen in her grace and bearing, although despair is expressed in her looks.

*Observation a Faculty.*

There are others throughout the car whose actions may be fascinatingly interesting, who convey care or lack of care, who show extravagance or economy; one man is big and brawny, who work in the mills, perhaps; another shows

his mental poise, perhaps a writer or a professional man. A clear mental picture has been made by the observer, the nature and character of each person has been weighed, their actions have been studied and note made of interesting details that would go to make up character in the forming of characters for a story.

Observation is a faculty, and a faculty that can be developed and improved. Observation is the instigator of ideas, and the observation of the careful writer can be commercialized if properly handled.

Our complex mode of living, our new methods of entertainment, the intricate workings of our government, our constantly changing social conditions, the various forms of our vast industries, the many varieties of employment, the different nationalities we meet, the occurrences and happenings of the day, the coming and going of friends, the meeting of enemies, the separating and uniting of families, court decrees and inventions furnish an inestimable source of ever-increasing, observing features.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE POWER OF CHARACTERS.

**N**EXT to plot, the building up of character is the weakest point in the work of most amateur authors and writers. Probably seventy-five per cent of the stories from this class of writers submitting moving picture stories are weak on dramatic characterization. While there are many ways of making up a story, and various ways of outlining a cast of characters and exploiting the *individualities* of those characters, there are very few authors who understand technique and dramatic psychology sufficiently to give the story the proper *twist*.

The individual character in most stories is not only badly developed, but the character itself is too commonplace, because that particular character does not have enough to do. This, then, is where the power of character should be studied by plot-makers, authors and writers. Character and psychology go hand in hand, even though they are opposite in their make-up.

Robert Louis Stevenson once told a friend of his that there were only three ways of making a story. "One might start a group of characters and devise a plot to exhibit them; or one might begin with a plot and fit the characters to this; or one might subordinate both plot and

characters to a special atmosphere, which was to be realized and made impressive."

### *Combining Characteristics.*

The individual characteristics, as written out and imagined by the average amateur writer, are very good, as a rule, to a certain point, but there the imagination seems to stop. To combine the characters of fifteen to twenty persons, or rather, we might say, to combine their peculiarities, and fit these various peculiarities into the actions of three or four people, is something that cannot well be done without a close study of characterization. The fact that Mrs. Smith is extremely particular in her purchases from the street huckster is probably not of much interest as that individual character might be concerned. The fact that Mrs. Brown's characteristics are just the opposite may be of little concern. Probably some of the characteristics of Mrs. Green are noticeable, but her interest does not go far enough to be of much importance to many persons. Thus we have *three characters*, none of which is particularly interesting, yet, with these characters worked in or *combined*, there is the possibility of working out a logical story from the standpoint of introducing the various characteristics of the *three* persons through the *action of one*.

### *Commonplace Characters.*

Many scenario writers make their *lead character* too commonplace from the fact that there

is nothing to do after the introduction in the first two or three scenes. From there this character moves on without any definite point in view, with no direct action, and no aim at development of character, whereas, if this particular *lead* character had some of the characteristics of various *other individuals* not considered so important in the play, they could be brought out from time to time with the proper development and to a point where they would not only be understandable, but would be effective in the action of the story.

*Shakespeare's Characters.*

William Hazlitt, in writing about the characters of Shakespeare's plays, says:

"Hamlet is a name; his speeches and sayings but the idle coinage of the poet's brain. What, then, are they not real? They are as real as our own thoughts. Their reality is in the reader's mind. It is *we* who are Hamlet. This play has a prophetic truth which is above that of history. Whoever has become thoughtful and melancholy through his own mishaps or those of others; whoever has borne with him the clouded brow of reflection and thought himself 'too much i' th' sun;' whoever has seen the golden lamp of day dimmed by envious mists rising in his own breast, and could find in the world before him only a dull blank with nothing left remarkable in it; whoever has known the pangs of despised love, the insolence of office, or the spurns which patient merit of the unworthy takes; he who has

felt his mind sink within him, and sadness cling to his heart like a malady, who has had his hopes blighted and his youth staggered by the apparitions of strange things; who cannot be well at ease while he sees evil hovering near him like a specter; whose powers of action have been eaten up by thought; he to whom the universe seems infinite and himself nothing; whose bitterness of soul makes him careless of consequences, and who goes to a play as his best resource to shove off, to a second remove, the evils of life by a mock representation of them—this is the *true* Hamlet.”

### *Unnecessary Characters.*

And thus we have the combination of character. Even in the combining of characteristics for the building up of the characters, there is a limit. Characters can only be shown in their *reality*, or, as imagination might stretch, as long as it is not worked up to a point of illogic.

Scenario writers are prone to use a great many unnecessary characters, yet some of these characters possess the characteristics and peculiarities that would greatly strengthen the *leading* characters were these peculiarities and characteristics worked in and *combined* with the *action* of such.

Characters are important because it is only *by and through them* we know of joy and sorrow, fears and hopes, the evil and the good—all brought out to confront us, to interest us. Neither invention nor achievement touches the

heartstrings like the agonizing cry of a lonely woman or the sob of the hardened criminal—it is only human to know and feel the sorrows and joys of others, and in photoplay characters these things form the particles of dramatic action that go to make up a *real* story. Life is full of action, and yet the writer and author finds it necessary to elaborate upon his discoveries because many of his every-day life characters prove *too common* to be of value in drama—they fail to conform to the writer's vision, so *he lives with and becomes a part of them*, strengthening, *building up and naturalizing* them to the color of his mind's eye and desire.

#### *Action Befitting Characters.*

Photoplay writing is somewhat different from fiction when the characters of the two are compared. In fiction, words can lead the reader onward in an imagination equal only to Defoe, but in pictures *actions only* can be utilized, and, therefore, the subjects are to be more delicately handled, dressed and arranged. In photoplays, one cannot describe a man's build, his little characteristics, his ambitions, his worries and his joys (they can be painted in most beautiful word pictures in fiction), but in a few words *all must be told in action*.

The selection of photoplay characters should be done carefully, for each character must *fit* into the story, and the story must *fit* the player. The leads must be pictured, become impressed



upon the mind of the author, the painter of the picture, and a touch of personality given them until they become the puppets of the maker—to do and act as he dictates. Write such into the photoplay manuscript, and there is no editor or director who will not see the *point* and carry it out.

### *The Leading Characters.*

The fewer the characters in the play, the more they must have to do in order to make them at all interesting. Action can be given to two or three characters that will take from them the loneliness that is apt to creep in in the work of the average amateur writer. Where a larger number of characters is used, there are but few to have the *leading* parts, all others are but auxiliary characters, just necessary to carry the *point* of the story. Careful study is urged of *character building* and of the power of *combining characteristics*.

Photoplay characters *act* and *live* in pictures, just the same as characters *talk* and *work* in fiction. Remember that characters mean the making of the story or the marring of it. It is not all up to the producer—the writer must create his plot, furnish the characters and so combine them both that the finished play is one of interest and satisfies the audience before which it is shown to be judged.

Dramatic characterization and the power of *combining* characters is simply the art of dramatic craftsmanship.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE WRITING OF COMEDY.

COMEDY, however strange it may seem to many writers, does not mean the conglomeration of funny incidents or the tying together of laughable situations. Comedy is divided into various classes, such as comedy, comedy-drama, farce, farce-comedy, burlesque and slap-stick, written in split-reel, full-reel or multiple-reel form, but whichever class it may come under the same rule applies to its composition—it must have *complete treatment*, embodying, in most cases, every technical term that can be applied to photoplay work, for comedy writing is more difficult, at least with most writers, than is drama, because there are amusing situations, fast action and a logical sequence to be applied.

#### *Distinction Between Comedies.*

The so-called “chase” pictures, while at times excruciatingly funny, are not real comedy. The book agent tossed out of the door by an irate housekeeper, the dude knocked off the pier into the water, the upsetting of a whitewash man’s paraphernalia, the accidental bumping into a pedestrian, the tumbling down of a ladder on which a painter stands, or the awkward young man who embarrassing stuffs the edge of the tablecloth

into his waistcoat, confusing it with his napkin, and thus dumping the dishes onto the floor, always create laughter, yet all these require farce-comedy treatment. The distinction between polite comedy and farce-comedy is seen in the story, "Over a Cracker Bowl," given below, and "The Fireman's Social," which follows:

*The Split-Reel Comedy.*

**"OVER A CRACKER BOWL."**

*(Split-reel comedy)*

A photoplay comedy in seventeen scenes, requiring thirteen interior and four exterior settings.

**CAST.**

*Jack Phillips*.....Newly wed

*Mrs. Phillips*.....

*Dick Edmonds*.....Jack's friend

**SYNOPSIS.**

Jack Phillips, newly wed, steals a march on friends by his marriage. He writes his old friend, Dick Edmonds, of his becoming a benedict, inviting him to come over from Philadelphia and visit him at his New York home, saying: "Come over and make yourself at home." In the meantime, over the breaking of a cracker bowl, a quarrel arises in Jack's happy home. Neither will surrender, and the bride leaves in anger. Jack lets her go, believing he is in the right. Then Jack goes downtown. Dick arrives, finds no one at home, but concludes to take Jack at his word, and makes himself comfortable. Dick brings presents for the bride and groom, laying one for the bride down thoughtlessly, but it leads to more or less complication when the wife returns, having decided to buy a cracker bowl, make up with Jack and begin over again. Dick proceeds to the bath room and enjoys a bath. The bride returns and Dick hears her sobbing as she finds his intended

present, she believing that Jack is false through her finding a woman's article. Then Jack, deciding to break the ice, buys a cracker bowl, too, and returns to ask forgiveness. In the meantime, Dick has gone to bed. Jack's wife steals into the bedroom, thinking Jack asleep. With tenderness she kisses the sleeping man, only to awaken him and find a stranger. Jack appears in time to straighten out the tangle; all animosity is laid aside, the two new cracker bowls and Dick's present to the bride playing important links that, when fastened together, make everything plain, and jollity follows.

## SCENE PLOT.

Dick's apartments .....	1
Jack's home, dining-room .....	2-3-8-13-17
Jack's bedroom .....	5-10-14-16
Jack's bathroom .....	7-9-11
Street .....	4-6-12-15

## "OVER A CRACKER BOWL."

*The Action*

## Scene 1. DICK'S BACHELOR APARTMENTS.

Dick dresses for street. He is handed a letter. He opens, smiling in surprise, as he reads:

Insert.

New York, June 25, 1914.

Mr. Dick Edmonds,  
Philadelphia.

Dear Dick:—I'm a benedict. I have married Helen. We have a cozy flat. Come over and make yourself at home. Yours, Jack.

Back to scene. Dick indicates delight. "I'll go over and see them," he declares, as he proceeds to pack up his suitcase.

Leader.

THAT EVENING.

## Scene 2. INTERIOR JACK'S HOME, DINING-ROOM; NIGHT.

Jack and bride at table. In his awkwardness, Jack knocks a china cracker bowl off table, breaking it, the crackers scattering over floor.

He looks at wife, who looks sadly at him, then breaks into tears. Jack laughs and makes matters worse. Quarrel follows. Both would make up, but are equally determined not to give in. Wife exits to bedroom. Jack sits silent, pondering over what he considers a trifle. Wife re-enters from bedroom, dressed for street. Neither speak, but want to. She exits, both eyeing one another; each waiting for the other to break the ice. Jack rubs head in quandary. Puts on coat, overcoat and hat and exits.

**Scene 3. SAME AS SCENE 2.**

Dick enters. Makes noise. "No one at home, I guess," he says, as he looks about room. Puts suitcase down and opens doors of room. Takes off overcoat, throws it over arm, puts hat on table, picks up suitcase and exits to bedroom.

**Scene 4. STREET, NIGHT; FRONT OF ART CHINA STORE.**

Wife enters, looks in window, discovers bowl like broken one. Decides to forgive Jack, buy bowl and return and ask his forgiveness. She enters store.

**Scene 5. INTERIOR BEDROOM; NIGHT.**

Dick takes box of cigars and a necklace from grip as presents for Jack and bride. He fingers necklace, indicating "Jack is a lucky dog. I wish I had a wife." He lays necklace on table thoughtlessly, putting cigars into grip.

**Scene 6. SAME AS SCENE 4.**

Wife emerges from store, bowl in hand, and showing delight. She hesitates, then, smilingly, decides that she must hurry home and forgive Jack. She exits.

**Scene 7. INTERIOR BATHROOM; NIGHT.**

Dick in tub, taking a bath. He shows his pleasure.

**Scene 8. SAME AS SCENE 2.**

Wife enters quietly and timidly. Looks about, wondering where Jack is. Sees Dick's hat;

thinks it is Jack's. She calls for him, going into bedroom, holding bowl back of her.

Scene 9. **SAME AS SCENE 7.**

Dick hears Jack's wife calling. He becomes alarmed. He begins to realize his position. He hears woman's voice coming nearer. He becomes excited.

Scene 10. **SAME AS SCENE 5.**

Wife finds necklace on stand. Can't understand what it means or where it came from. She becomes suspicious. "Can it be that Jack is false?" She breaks into sobs.

Scene 11. **SAME AS SCENE 7.**

Dick at bathroom door, dressed in bathrobe. He hears sobs. He trembles as he wonders if he can be in the wrong house.

Scene 12. **SAME AS SCENE 4.**

Jack enters; stops and ponders. Sees cracker bowl in window. Gets an idea. "I'll get the bowl and make it right with her," he declares as he enters store, broad smile playing over his face.

Scene 13. **SAME AS SCENE 2.**

Wife has bowl in one hand and necklace in the other. Concludes that perhaps Jack has bought the necklace to make up for the broken bowl. She sits down and thinks how foolish she has been in quarreling over a trifle, indicating that as she fingers the broken pieces of bowl. Lays bowl and necklace down and goes outside.

Scene 14. **SAME AS SCENE 5.**

Dick prepares for bed. Shows agitation over whether he is in wrong house or not, but concludes he'll go to bed anyhow. He climbs into bed, covering up his head.

Scene 15. **SAME AS SCENE 4.**

Jack emerges from store, bowl in hand. Ponders over situation and decides that forgiveness is

better thing to do, and he exits, smiling as he anticipates making up with bride.

Scene 16. SAME AS SCENE 5.

Dick sleeps soundly. Wife enters. Crosses to bed, believing Jack is in bed asleep. She holds bowl back of her as she approaches bed. She leans over, turns back covers and kisses Dick, awakening him. She screams and runs out. Dick jumps out of bed in pajamas, almost demoralized.

Scene 17. SAME AS SCENE 2.

Jack comes in at door from street as wife comes screaming from bedroom, holding bowl back of her as she sees husband. Jack hides his purchase back of him. Neither speak. She breaks silence. Tells of man in bed. Jack picks up Dick's hat, but doesn't recognize it. Both still hiding bowls back of them, Jack enters bedroom, returning leading Dick by ear, Dick with grip and clothes in arms. Explanations follow. Bowls are given. Dick hands cigars to Jack, Mrs. Jack giving up necklace, but present is returned to her and jollity follows.

*Varieties of Comedy.*

A good comedy story is not an easy thing to produce, yet there is always a good demand for clean, straight comedy, although the market varies from farce-comedy to burlesque and rough slap-stick at different times.

Occasionally an appropriate *cut-in* or *leader* adds as much to the value of the comedy script as does the action itself, and to explain this, suppose a comedy is written in which an Irishwoman is the leading character. In the story a street car is used. The woman

enters the car, which is a crowded one, and is shown standing, holding a basket, and so far, surely, there is nothing humorous; but suppose a man rises from his seat and proffers it to the standing woman, a *cut-in* being used as follows:

“*Sit down, won’t you?*”

“*No, thank you, I’m in a hurry.*”

This bit of dialogue immediately has its weight and creates laughter. Again, take the story dealing with a character in a play in which a railroad train is used; this character is seen sitting in the last coach. During the action the intent is brought out to show the conversation drifting to accidents on railroad trains, and to the fact that most people are killed in the last coach. Nothing particularly funny here. But suppose this character immediately exclaims, and it is shown in a *cut-in leader*:

“*Why don’t they take the last coach off?*”

There we have another bit of comedy explained through screen dialogue, or conversation, and without its being screened there would have been no humor and no comedy, for the spectators would not have known about what the characters were talking.

### *Dialogue in Stories.*

These inserted expressions carry the story, make the situations interesting and amusing, for without them no one would have known



what the action was, and, therefore, it would have been dry, commonplace and misunderstood. Dialogue, however, cannot always be used effectively to carry the story nor to explain action, because dialogue used either as a *leader* or a *cut-in* must necessarily consume quite a few feet of film, and it is better, wherever possibly, to use *action only*. Yet the combination of action and dialogue can be admirably used in comedy writing.

Comedy is purely the converse of tragedy, but its style differs from that of drama. Comedy creation requires as much character drawing as does drama, and there is the same distinction between comedy and farce-comedy as between drama and melodrama, comedy being more of a refined order of farce. In straight comedy characters are not overdrawn, and the value of the story rests entirely on the plot, while in farce-comedy incidents and exaggerated situations, even though extremely overdone, carry the point of the subject, and if exciting or boisterous, it might be termed a "screaming farce," such as some of the Keystone farces.

The burlesque comedy is a sort of a "dramatic parody," for it deals with higher, but farcified, characters.

### *Situations in Comedy.*

In writing any type of comedy thought must be given as to whether the plot war-

rants a full-reel subject or less. Many good comedies are told in four to six hundred feet of film, and the art of condensation can be as well applied to comedy as to drama, although in farce the resorting to *cutbacks* and *flashes* is permitted, because the action must be fast. Padding, of course, should not be done, but if needed, the editor or director can supply it. The comedy or farce should end at the proper place and not be stretched out in the creation of innumerable situations, for there is less liberty allowed in this character of writing than in drama. One particular mistake many writers make is that they start a comedy and end with farce, or start with farce and finish with straight comedy. This is to be avoided, and can only be done by the writer's close application to the rules of writing.

In the farce-comedy, "The Firemen's Social," the author kept his story as close to farce as it was possible to do, and some of the laughable situations therein created were brought out by the combination of dialogue and action. This story was a split-reel subject of fifty-six scenes, five *leaders* and one *insert*, including four *busts*, ran about seven hundred and thirty feet, and required seven minutes to show.

*The Farce Comedy.*

## "THE FIREMEN'S SOCIAL."

(Split-reel farce.)

## CAST.

*Katherine*.....*The firemen's idol*  
*Percival*.....*Lead, a dude in love with Katherine*  
*Francis*.....*A fireman, Katherine's favored suitor*  
*Schneipner*.....*The tailor*  
*The constable, firemen, girl guests, citizens.*

## SYNOPSIS.

Katherine, who lives next door to the fire engine-house and is the idol of the firemen, gives a dancing party for them. In case of an alarm of fire during the party, the firemen wire a gong into Katherine's house. Now, there is a young sissy-boy, Percival, who is madly in love with Katherine. He asks her if he may come to her party and she tells him he may. He comes, prepared to cut out the firemen from Katherine, and particularly Francis, who is Katherine's favorite and generally regarded by the other firemen as her real sweetheart. At the party Katherine pays little attention to Percival and will not dance with him. Percival finds himself a back number; but he is not to be so easily beaten at Cupid's game. The big gong in the house serves as an inspiration. Percival slips out and into the fire engine-house, where he rings in a false alarm, whereby he expects to get the fireman away that he will have full sway with Katherine. Percival's scheme has the desired effect. The firemen rush into the engine-house and prepare for the fire. But Katherine is more interested in the fire and the firemen than is Percival. Not finding any sign of a fire, they put away the apparatus and return to the dance. But Percival is persistent; he tries the same stunt again, with the same result. The firemen this time, finding they have been fooled, make up their minds the gong can ring all it wants to for all they care. But Percival this time, in slipping out a window, tears his trousers seriously. He accordingly makes straight for Schneipner, the tailor. Schneipner, aroused from a peaceful sleep, is persuaded to mend the trousers. In drawing the needle, Schneipner knocks down the stove-pipe and overturns the stove; the trousers and everything else go up in flames. Schneipner rushes out and turns in the fire alarm. Percival, minus his trousers, is in a dilemma, indeed. Finally, as a last resort, he grabs a blanket from Schneipner's bed, wraps it around him and escapes, the blanket afire at one end. He tears down the street, leaving

a trail of smoke behind him, and reaching the engine-house, puts out the fire with a chemical extinguisher, there now being little left of the blanket. Meanwhile, the firemen, paying no attention to the continually ringing gong, are getting quite hilarious with the large amount of wine provided. Hearing the commotion outside, they go out and see great volumes of smoke pouring from the engine-house. They rush in, discover the trouble and throw Percival in an ice-water tank. They then discover there is a real fire uptown. They get the hose cart and are off to put out the fire. The girls all come into the engine-house and make themselves comfortable. Percival is forced to remain in the tank and nearly freezes to death. When the firemen return, they take pity on him and provide him with a pair of trousers to go home in. Katherine promises to marry Francis; but Percival is only too thankful for a chance to get home to bother with such trifles.

*The Action.*

**Scene 1. EXTERIOR FIRE ENGINE-HOUSE.**  
Firemen sitting about, joking; become suddenly interested in something else. Enter Katherine. Greets all sprightly and with much cheer. Passes written invitations to each one.

**INSERT.** (Invitation.)  
This is to invite you to a ball at my house next Saturday evening. And I am giving it expressly for you, my friends, the firemen. Katherine. Back to scene. Firemen elated. Jump in glee. Enter Francis from engine-house. Katherine goes to him eagerly.

**LEADER.** IN CASE OF AN ALARM OF FIRE, THE FIREMEN WIRE  
A GONG INTO KATHERINE'S HOUSE.

**Scene 2. EXTERIOR FIRE ENGINE-HOUSE, SHOWING KATHERINE'S HOUSE NEXT DOOR.**  
Firemen discovered running wires from engine-house to Katherine's house.

**Scene 3. INTERIOR KATHERINE'S HOUSE.**  
Firemen discovered installing a large gong. Katherine looking on. Enter Francis. Love scene. Firemen proud of their work. See Francis and Katherine making love. No place for them. Exeunt.

**LEADER.** THE GREAT EVENT TAKES PLACE.

**Scene 4. SAME AS 2. (Night tint.)**  
Enter Percival. Struts past engine-house as though he is better than any of them. Goes to

Katherine's house. Exits into house. Firemen enter from engine-house, all dressed up, very proudly to Katherine's house. Exeunt. Enter Francis from engine-house in hurry to Katherine's.

- Scene 5. INTERIOR KATHERINE'S AS IN 3.  
All firemen, Percival, Katherine and other girls discovered. Great merriment. Katherine is plainly the belle. All are trying to get the first dance, *particularly* Percival, who is very jealous of Francis. Katherine favors Francis. Dance begins. Percival is sulky. Refuses to dance with anyone else. Walks over to gong; looks at it; has scheme; elated. Exits.

LEADER. IN ORDER TO GET THE FIREMEN AWAY FROM KATHERINE, PERCIVAL TURNS IN A FALSE ALARM.

- Scene 6. ELECTRIC SWITCHBOARD SHOWN IN ENGINE-HOUSE.  
Enter Percival. Fusses with switchboard. Gets shock. Is more careful. Turns lever.

- Scene 7. SAME AS 5.  
All are dancing. Instantly stop. Firemen rush from house.

- Scene 8. BUST OF GONG RINGING.

- Scene 9. SAME AS 6.  
Percival hears commotion. Exits.

- Scene 10. EXTERIOR ENGINE-HOUSE.  
Firemen discovered rushing into engine-house. Run hose cart out. Get ready for fire.

- Scene 11. PORCH OF KATHERINE'S HOUSE.  
Girls discovered standing on porch looking for fire. Enter Percival. Tries to be attentive to Katherine. She is too interested in fire to pay any attention to him.

LEADER. "WHERE IS THE FIRE?"

- Scene 12. SAME AS 10.  
No one seems to know where the fire is. They parley; run hose cart back. Declare they will not be fooled again. Go back to dance.

- Scene 13. SWITCHBOARD. SAME AS 6.  
Enter Percival. Turns lever. Exits hastily.

- Scene 14. SAME AS 8. BUST OF GONG RINGING.

- Scene 15. INTERIOR OF KATHERINE'S SAME AS 5.  
Firemen discovered rushing out.

- Scene 16. **EXTERIOR OF ENGINE-HOUSE IN REAR.**  
Enter Percival through window. Tears his trousers on nail. Laments misfortune. Exits.
- Scene 17. **SAME AS SCENE 11.**
- Scene 18. **EXTERIOR SCHNEIPNER'S TAILOR SHOP.**  
Enter Percival. Tries door. Finds it locked; is disappointed; pounds on door.
- Scene 19. **BACK TO SCENE 10.**
- Scene 20. **INTERIOR OF SCHNEIPNER'S; DARK.**  
Schneipner discovered, asleep.
- Scene 21. **BACK TO SCENE 11.**
- Scene 22. **SAME AS 18.**  
Percival pounding mightily.
- Scene 23. **SAME AS 18.**  
Schneipner is aroused. Wonders what rum-pus is. Goes to door. Careful not to exert himself. Admits Percival. Percival excitedly asks him to mend trousers; points to tear. Schneipner yawns. Percival implores him. Schneipner lights lamp. Bids Percival take off trousers. Points to screen. Percival goes behind screen. Throws trousers out to Schneipner.
- Scene 24. **EXTERIOR OF FIRE ENGINE-HOUSE, SAME AS 10.**  
Firemen discovered ready for fire. Can't find out anything about it; are angry; put hose cart away; go back to dance.
- Scene 25. **INTERIOR OF SCHNEIPNER'S, SAME AS 19.**  
Schneipner sitting by table, stitching with long, sweeping movements of arm, knocks stove-pipe, upsetting stove. Place catches fire. Schneipner excited. Rushes outside. Percival rushes from behind screen. Picks up trousers. They are a mass of flames. Starts to run outside. Realizes his condition. Rushes back and forth in frenzy.
- Scene 25. **STREET FIRE ALARM BOX.**  
Schneipner is approaching, running, making poor headway; reaches alarm; stops to get breath; hunts in pocket for key; badly excited; can't find key.
- Scene 26. **SAME AS IN SCENE 5.**
- Scene 27. **SAME AS SCENE 23.**  
Fire is gaining. Percival in despair.
- Scene 28. **SAME AS 25.**  
Schneipner finds key. Turns in alarm.

- Scene 29. BACK TO SCENE 25.
- Scene 30. SAME AS 8. BUST OF GONG RINGING.
- Scene 31. INTERIOR OF KATHERINE'S, SAME AS 5.  
All provoked at gong ringing. Firemen are not to be fooled again; pay no attention. Supper is announced. All delighted. Exeunt into dining-room. Francis has his arm around Katherine.
- Scene 32. BACK TO SCENE 8.
- Scene 33. DINING-ROOM.  
Enter firemen with girls.
- Scene 34. INTERIOR OF SCHNEIPNER'S, SAME AS 25.  
Fire under headway; much smoke. Percival seizes burning blanket from couch, one end of which is afire. Exits hurriedly.
- Scene 35. BACK TO SCENE 33.
- Scene 36. STREET.  
Constable discovered looking at fire across street, wondering what is the matter with the fire department. Enter Percival from alley beside tailor shop. He has blanket wrapped about him, which is smoking terrifically. He tears down street. Constable follows. Exeunt from picture.
- Scene 37. SAME AS 8. BUST OF GONG RINGING.
- Scene 38. BACK TO SCENE 33.  
All discovered at table. Much hilarity. Firemen pouring down wine. Already getting elated.
- Scene 39. EXTERIOR ENGINE-HOUSE AND KATHERINE'S, SHOWING VIEW UP STREET.  
Percival discovered approaching with smoking blanket. Constable and others are following. Percival reaches engine-house. Dashes in. Volume of smoke everywhere.
- Scene 40. INTERIOR OF ENGINE-HOUSE.  
Chemical fire extinguisher discovered. Smoke appears. Percival dashes in. Grabs chemical extinguisher. Puts out fire on himself. He is lost to view in smoke.
- Scene 41. SAME AS 39.  
Smoke pouring out of engine-house. Crowd gathers. Constable wonders where firemen are. Some point to Katherine's house. Rush to door.
- Scene 42. DINING-ROOM, AS IN 38.  
Firemen quite tipsy. Still pouring down wine. Hear commotion outside. General confusion.

- Scene 43. INTERIOR OF ENGINE-HOUSE, SAME AS 40. Smoke clears. Firemen rush in. Spy Percival trying to hide. He is sorry spectacle. They seize him and throw him into ice-water tank. Constable and others rush in. Tell firemen of fire raging uptown. Firemen run hose cart out.
- Scene 44. EXTERIOR OF ENGINE-HOUSE, SAME AS 39. Girls all discovered. General excitement. Enter firemen with hose cart from engine-house. Start up street rather *crookedly*. Girls exeunt into engine-house.
- Scene 45. CUT BACK TO 43.  
Percival in tank.
- Scene 46. STREET.  
Firemen running hose cart crookedly.
- Scene 47. INTERIOR OF ENGINE-HOUSE, SAME AS 43. Percival is about to crawl out of tank. Enter girls. He "ducks" back.
- Scene 48. SAME AS 36. STREET BEFORE SCHNEIPNER'S.  
Smoke galore. Enter firemen with hose cart from down street. All little *reely*. Start to work on fire.
- Scene 49. CUT BACK TO 43.  
Percy in tank.
- Scene 50. SAME AS 46.  
Girls discovered with firemen.
- Scene 51. BACK TO 43.  
Percival shivering.
- LEADER. TWO HOURS LATER.
- Scene 52. SAME AS 48.  
Fire out. Firemen start home.
- Scene 53. CUT BACK TO 43.  
Percival in tank.
- Scene 54. SAME AS 42.  
Girls in game.
- Scene 55. INTERIOR OF TANK, SAME AS 43.  
Percival shivering *violently*.
- Scene 56. SAME AS 45.  
Girls discovered. Hear firemen coming. Are delighted. Enter firemen. General greetings. Some look in tank. Laugh heartily. Tell girls joke. Girls laugh. Exeunt girls. They help Percival out. Francis gets him pair of trousers. Percival thankful. Makes his escape. Re-enter girls. All laugh. Francis and Katherine in foreground. He proposes. She accepts. Embrace. Congratulations.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE PHOTOPLAY CLIMAX.

**I**T is just as important to prepare a strong last scene and climax as it is to plan for the beginning.

To know when to end or to write the climax is a difficult matter for the amateur to learn. Characters are taken further than their power to interest the audience goes. Every author should realize when the time comes for the climax. Interest must be satisfied and no more. The climax is the point that leaves the impression of the play. It is placed where all lines of action are drawn together, tied up and the end presented with a *punch*—it is the complete unraveling of the plot and a thing that reveals all that heretofore might have been mysteriously covered up. Ordinarily, the amateur writer considers death the means by which the climax is reached, but death is not always telling in its effect and the writer who can create a strong climax without the introduction of death will have succeeded in making the story stronger and better than the writer who resorts to extinct life as a climax. One crisis after another will lead up to the making of a strong ending, and if these crises are not watched carefully the climax may be different

from what the author intended, but the writer's ability should there demonstrate itself in the creating of a better result than the originally-conceived plot had the author minutely followed his first intuition of the idea. Step by step, the action must grow from the first obstacle to the anti-crisis and from anti-crisis to climax and from climax to anti-climax.

*The Dominant Principle.*

The end must be an emphatic one, whether it be the condemnation of one character or the proving of absolute innocence of another; and whatever the culmination be it must be brushed with the artistic touch of the author. Crudeness must be avoided even as much as a hackneyed ending. The dominant principle of the play must have its inevitable explanation at the end of the story even though the possible outcome may have been hinted at earlier in the story. But because emphasis is essential in the last scene is no reason why other scenes should not be made emphatic.

The salable scenario should contain every element that leads from the plausible plot beginning to a logical ending. It is amazing how few writers are able to end their stories with emphasis and punch, with a new twist and a decided variation from the striking similarity one play has to another. Emphasis can be overdone; a story can be distorted by the quickening force of the author's desire to bring characteristic elements into the plot. It is more important

that the story bring itself out from its natural source aided only by the author's ability to create new twist and emphasis.

It is well to foreshadow the ending, yet bring the climax about in such a way that its unexpectedness and revealing power will have its effect on the audience.

### *Inventing New Obstacles.*

The intuitional idea of many writers that work the "fates-decree" theme generally leads to a direct ending inasmuch as the climax has been too early foreshadowed. "The way of the transgressor is hard," and while this is the plot germ of many stories, the action and ending is weakened because the climax is foretold at an improper time. The majority of amateur writers unconsciously substitute the transgressor's end for original thought. One can not overlook the supremacy of fate, but there are so many ways of creating, suggesting and introducing escape, termination and elimination by the inventing of new obstacles and situations that the making of such errors is to be condemned because such action immediately puts the hackneyed stamp on the story and the mark of the amateur on the script.

Either despair or happiness comes with the ending of the story and the problem that the author must solve is how to judiciously terminate the story and bring about a logical, pleasing, interesting ending of his plot. Study and study only will bring this about. No story

can lead up with a proper sequence to a logical ending without having emphasis and dramatic touch applied to the actions and characters of the play throughout.

*Utilizing Effective Points.*

Pauses are necessary, breaks are necessary, leaders, flashes and cutbacks must be used and how these are to be effectively utilized can only be learned by experience. One story or five stories, whether rejected or purchased, will not put the writer in the professional class.

The point of greatest interest is the climax proper of the photoplay. The story may have several minor climaxes, such strong situations that they forcefully appeal to the undramatic and to those who do not know the real meaning of dramatic art. One may see photodramas every day, perhaps, that have such anti-climaxes and crises woven into them that they consume so much more of the dramatic situation, one grand climax after the other following in almost rapid procession, that when the real end or climax appears it is hardly recognizable. Some writers are very adept in constructing plays of this sort, and this is a class that seems to "make a hit" with a certain element of motion-picture theater goers; it is the kind of a story that will always "go" with some people, and it has always proved the effective sort of play for the box office, both in the legitimate and in the cinema productions.

*Sensational Plays.*

Years ago, when the sensational Blaney and Kramer type of productions were the delight of the "Gallery Gods," the story consisting of blood-and-thunder plots, miraculous escapes, leaps for life, evicted-in-the-dead-of-winter-to-be-rescued-on-the-brink-of-destruction ideas, and plays dealing with the struggles of "Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak Model;" "Midnight in Chinatown," "The Limited Mail," "Across the Pacific" and others, the appeal was made direct to the admirers of such attempt at dramatic presentation, melodramatic to the creative point of thrill, even morbidly fascinating, inartistic; withal what that particular class of theater-goers demanded.

Combination and obstacle lead up to the climax, but after the climax has passed it is a difficult problem for the average author to "ease up" on the situation and to remove the complications and still maintain the play's interest. To attain the desired result, careful attention must be paid to the growth and progress of the story. The best way to accomplish the desired result must rest entirely with the author. If the author follows in the path of a brother writer, he is apt to construct his climax with a striking similarity to the plays of other writers.

*Currents of Similarity.*

The thing to do is to thrust individuality and personality into a story—make it so totally dif-

ferent that the editor who reads it will know he has then a "find." The supply of power to do this thing is unlimited—it lies within the grasp of every would-be scenario author. Story without plot will not make for any sort of a climax, because it lacks the material and power to develop anything of interest. The continued current of similarity that many writers permit to run through their work by following too closely the plays of others instead of originating, developing and individualizing their own plot-germs, wearies them because it results in a continuance of rejection slips. There can be no refreshing reception of new plot material, no progress, no success by such methods.

Be original—from introduction to climax.

Compromise or the mere reunion of characters does not mean climax. A climax is a thing that satisfies, not merely creates. Too many climaxes are like the subsiding of a storm. How much more delightful and interesting is the story with a crispness and a decision of satisfaction than the conventional play effected with pure compromise. The distorting of plot does not mean climax, nor will it make for a good dramatic climax—never. Sometimes, such endings are disgusting.

### *Unwinding the Plot.*

The photoplay story is based on as sound principles of dramatic action and art as in the modern book story or legitimate stage play; it takes and requires time to master all elements

entering in photoplay writing, and some of the things to learn are the ones suggested herein. Climax and anti-climax must come of their own growth, brought about by naturally-created situations and incidents of the play, and if artistically written the story will exhibit its own plot, it will gather action and interest and all the striking scenes and situations will be summed up into one grand situation, crisis or climax with a power that will gently or churlishly portray and present the action as the writer wills.

The indispensable quality of a photoplay from the inception of the plot to the finish of the story lies in the ability of the author to create his characters, to unwind his plot, to weave in situations, to build up suspense, invent obstacles and complications that, while the audience is wondering how his characters will get out of their difficulties, he is interestingly working in the development of a crisis and climax that will bring to the spectators the force of the story in such a manner that it causes comment and awakens the sympathy or hatred of the audience and at the same time concludes amid an environment of realism.

### *Where To End a Story.*

Punch is an overworked word in photoplay construction. Combined crises, interest, sympathy and climax, woven into a new idea or twisted about an old theme, means punch—anything in the action of a character, in the

beginning of a scene or the breaking of a scene or in the climax that makes for suspense, emotion and heart touch is the thing that counts; it is the thing that leads up and makes the possibilities stand out foremost in the eyes and mind of the author who can so visualize his plot as to write a logical, interest-holding climax—and stop there.



## CHAPTER XV.

### KNOWING YOUR CHARACTERS.

THE giving of secondary importance to characters and characterization has proved to be the unseen stumbling block in the path of many writers. The skillful author of today is the commercial writer—the writer who works for monetary consideration, albeit he must derive sufficient inspiration from some source to create the plot in which his characters must act. Every character must have something to do with the plot, directly or indirectly. Another mistake amateur writers make is the placing in the cast of the story, characters that are unnecessary to bring out the action of the play. The lead character must deal directly with the action, and in dealing directly with the action, that character is dealing with the plot; he becomes a *part of the plot*. But in order to consistently carry out the visualization of the author, that character must be made to confine himself to the plot and his part in order to carry the story to a successful conclusion by action and expression.

There are various ways in which a particular character might be given sufficient freedom during the action of the play to break the monotony that sometimes is apt to creep into

a photoplay drama. It might be done by by-play, or otherwise, but it takes skillful handling to do it in any event.

*Eye Picturization.*

Every author should *think out and act out by eye picturization* the work his characters are to portray; he must take into consideration their tendencies, foibles and makeup, and be that particular character brave or bold, generous or ignoble—that character *must be real*.

It is a matter of choice whether the writer selects material first, or his characters; some writers find a title and write the story around it, but however done, a close study of characters and characterization is urged. Real characterization cannot be brought about without the author's full knowledge of the work a particular character is to perform, and the course the plot must pursue before it gets to its climax. Technique may be used to *introduce* the character; it *cannot* apply the force to bring out the desired intent—that is something the *character must do*.

Imagination and inspiration are closely linked in building up a part for the lead character to a story, and the point demanded in photodrama production is that the character, powerfully and interestingly, portray the thought and imagination of the writer—that character *must bring forth all* the vital parts of the story as the author has conceived them,

coming one after another in a unity that *clearly defines* the objective.

*Seeing the Mental Picture.*

Most every author finds in writing a story that if he is not careful his characters will wander away and become disassociated with the plot the writer originally started with; sometimes this results in the making of another story and often more.

The dispassionate use of incomparable words is quite unnecessary in photoplay work, yet the fault with many amateur writers is that they attempt to weave into the story unnecessary action and undesirable dialogue, when the scenario-story itself can carry it. The *effect of feeling and emotion* may be procured and depicted by the use of a mere skeleton of a scenario. It is quite unnecessary to burden the characters with a capacious amount of words and valueless action through a preponderance of the same. Each character should be as a mental picture before the writer; he should be real, and for photoplay work, the briefer his word action the better, for one must always bear in mind that photoplay dramatization is different than the legitimate, because one does not have the time to bring into action and put into dialogue things that are permitted on the regular stage. One must remember that in the legitimate a character may spend two hours in his work, while on the screen he is probably limited to fifteen to thirty minutes. In order

to make a lovable and interesting character, that character must be studied; he must be lived with; he must be cherished, and the characterization built up by mental visualization. There are many things a character can do, but if the writer lets the character run away from the original plot, he only *weakens his action*.

### *Building Up Character.*

As Louis N. Parker knew and studied his "Disraeli," as Dickens loved his "Little Mary," and as Galesworthy lived with his "Conqueror," so the author of "A Girl and Her Money" knew Flo Kingsley. The writer of that story took Flo Kingsley from her childhood days, from her folks back home, as with childish clatter the capricious young woman raced through the house, as did the kiddies next door. Flo was always happy, and her happiness was radiated by the author. As she grew into girlhood and then blossomed into womanhood, her smiles and cheer were with her, and the writer made mental notes of them all. Everybody loved Flo, the child, the girl, the woman. At home, abroad, and everywhere, she radiated optimism in her wonderful laughing eyes and features; a hearty handclasp for this one and a twinkle in her eye for that, the mimical laugh for her friends, and always a smile for each. The author *made her character stand out*; he watched her; he visualized her; he saw nothing but Flo Kingsley from the time the story began until the time it was finished, and with his heroine

fulfilling the part for which she was intended, making the characterization complete, the author had finished an interesting photoplay work.

### *Making Sharp Contrasts.*

Vagabondage is characteristic of great men; all men of great genius love to wander. Oliver Goldsmith was a wanderer, but he built wonderful characters. Byron was restless, but he radiated character in a diversified and fascinating manner. Aristotle knew character and made character, and so the stories of classic writers of centuries ago and those of the professional writers of today are teeming with that characterization which is so necessary to story writing and photoplay production.

There is no use having character without a purpose, any more than a world of literature, of music, of sculpture, of art, without a didactic purpose, would not be in harmony.

On the screen one cannot hear the conversation; action must take the place of words. A love scene or a tragedy can be depicted in a few words, but most amateur writers seem to forget that they are writing silent action, and they go on and on in their storyization of the plot until, at times, they have created almost a novel, instead of a scenario. Judgment means much in the work of *building up character*. Every detail should be thought out and worked out before the character is given his work which is put into scenario form for the editor. Sharp contrast must be made, the story must be re-

written, revised, and the mental senses trained on the characters, especially on the lead, in order that the action may be in keeping with the plot.

*Function of Characters.*

The function of every character should be understood, and if some functions are unnecessary, they should be eliminated, and not left to drag down the character and lessen his ability to play the part intended. The main characters must always be to the fore, they must early be introduced and they must be governed by something that will not allow them to do as they please. Many stories have been spoiled because the director has overlooked some of the frailties of the writer in his inability to create situations that would keep the characters consistently and logically busy in their particular parts, instead of allowing them to have their freedom. This has not occurred often, but it has occurred and will occur again.

Many writers evolve a plot in their mind and conclude that they cannot do without at least six characters, and these characters then are turned loose on the stage as a farmer would turn six cattle into the pasture—they are left to wander aimlessly about within the confines of the stage and the field, the author knowing that as long as they stay within the confines there can be no danger of the characters getting away from the plot, but they are allowed so

much freedom that the plot and value of the story are depreciated.

*Becoming Too Conventional.*

In this class of story, the novice leaves nothing for his central characters to do but to carry out in a direct manner, bit by bit, some of the actions the author wishes introduced; even though he may have a proper sequence to follow, there is something that should happen and which *does not happen*, and the situation and story are left in a commonplace shape, and when the story reaches the editor, he immediately stamps it as *too conventional*. When a story is returned marked "too conventional," the author wonders why the editor did not grasp the situation as the writer viewed it, yet this same writer may have failed to put character into his story. The author must write *real characterization* into his story, otherwise it will not prove available.

Character should be *made the servant of the author*, rather than character *the master of the writer*. The interpreter of a film story must thoroughly question the actions of his character. The slow, ordinary, everyday thing is not desirable. The character must take on something new, whether he is taking a part of hero, villain, comedian or tragedian, and by the employing of various circumstances and situations the part that character portrays must be woven about him, studied, and put together in such a way as to bring out every expression of that

character. It is neither cheering nor interesting to have a character prove monotonous or tiresome by his lack of action. A character must be strong and forceful in any part he takes. If subsidiary characters are at times given a direct interest in the plot, that takes, for the time being, the interest of the spectators from the lead.

*Elements of Character.*

Characterization means *clothing the characters with charm and power*. The skillful writer can do this, the amateur writer *must* learn it. As plays are created from inspiration, so the characters should be built from imagination and inspiration. The writer cannot depend upon photography to carry a story. Photography is an element of its own, just as directing is an art in itself. What the author must do is to *build up his character*, whether he introduces him with a trembling sympathy, an interesting simplicity, or brings him into the story depicting sorrow, happiness or emotional tragedy. Confusion and passion, sympathy and innocence, hatred and love, devotion and selfishness are the creative elements of the author that can be attached to his mind's characters, and these particular parts must be made *forceful and plain*, basing the characterization of the player upon them, in order to get a thorough interpretation of a *real* life portrayal.



*The Defined Purpose.*

It needs an observing mind to prepare a character for dramatic action, and many uses may be made of the observation and the results thereof. Many times incident and accident and the realities brought about through the intervention of characters can be divided and used in various ways, some reflected to one character and some to another. Characters, when created, must be *held to their creation* and used only to bring out the action of the story. Characters may be used for several purposes, but there is always *one defined purpose*, and that is to describe, by brief action, the plot of the story, as invented by the author.

Nothing assures success, nothing creates interest, nor nothing brings a better price than *real character work injected into a photoplay* full of *real* heart-touching, sympathetic interest. Characterization means study, and when this art is accomplished, the rejection period of photoplay manuscripts will have vanished.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE MULTIPLE REEL.

**M**ORE than a one-reel subject should not be attempted by the photoplay author who has not *sold* his first single-reel story. Successful single-reel subjects and short stories may be favorably compared with multiple-reel photoplays and serial stories. Many amateurs think they can write a double-reel scenario better than a single-reel, because they believe it gives them a better opportunity to think, to write—to expand. But such is not the case, because no plot is worth more than one reel unless it has the interest and value that warrants it. Too often one-reel subjects are made into two-reel plays by *padding*, but the able editor who sees such a story immediately “cuts” it down to one reel. It is impossible to tell how many scenes are required for a one, two, three, five or seven reel subject. This all depends on the character and nature of the play.

In the production of “Neptune’s Daughter” over 30,000 feet of film was used, but the story in its exhibition form was cut to 7,000 feet, or seven reels. Only experience will teach the average writer to figure out *how many* scenes a certain play is going to

take, and the length and number depends, as said before, on the character of the plot.

*Crises in Multiple Reels.*

The construction of a multiple-reel photoplay is the same as the building of a one-reel story, except that each reel must have its *crises* and its *climax*, the last reel to have one big "punch" and climax.

It is not a difficult matter for the successful one-reel writer to write multiple-reel subjects. There are two methods used in the writing of multiple-reel stories as to preparation of synopsis. One method is to use one synopsis for the entire story; the other to use a separate synopsis for each reel, the latter being preferable. In "A Reservation Romance," given herewith in its entirety, the proper method of writing a multiple-reel subject is shown.

In this story it would be impossible to show it and give the dramatic situations in 1,000 feet of film. There is no *padding* to the story; it is *action* throughout.

The story deals with a young school teacher, Lucille Blair, who passes the civil service examination and is sent to an Indian reservation school, where Lieutenant Hall and Captain Wolfe prove rivals for her hand. Colonel Lyon's daughter, Alice, secretly in love with Hall, plans to ruin Hall in the eyes of the young teacher. Captain Wolfe and the Colonel's daughter plot together.

*The Triangular Situation.*

Lieutenant Hall rescues Phala, Chief Mohawk's daughter, from his cruel hands and becomes her friend, which she *mistakes* for love. In the Indian girl's mistaking friendship for love begins the triangular, heart-interesting action of the story, because it shows Alice, Lucille and the Indian girl all in love with the one man—with Lucille the target. The end of the first reel of this story leaves considerable suspense, because it is so written that the audience does not know *what* to expect with the beginning of the first scenes of the next reel. Chief Mohawk jumps the reservation, taking Hall prisoner, and knowing the school teacher's concealed love for the lieutenant, sends a note to her, which brings the girl to his tepee. On her arriving there the rapid action of the story begins. Entanglements are seen, complication arises and the suspense is heightened. The note was only a *ruse*, and the Indian chief suggests to the teacher that if she become his squaw he will let the white man live. There again the suspense is heightened, and the spectators are left in wonderment as to what the girl *will* do—whether she will accept his proposition or reject it.

*Thrills of Melodrama.*

The third reel shows that the teacher **knows** that Hall's death will be attributed to her, and she decides to act. In the meantime,

Captain Wolfe has been brought to a realization of his duty, and with Phala, Lucille and Alice, all four fight and plot to save the life of the doomed lieutenant. "It's your life or mine; the school needs you—I'll go," the lieutenant whispers to the teacher. Then comes a chance for Captain Wolfe to show the making of a real man, and he takes the chance. The Indian girl, however, realizing her failure to win the white man's love, goes to the aid of her father. Spirited action by the use of *cutbacks* now begins to present itself, the story moves faster and faster, the plot thickens, it grows in intensity and the suspense and wonderment create just what a melodrama requires—*thrills*. Captain Wolfe proves himself a man, but almost at the cost of his life and those of others. The climax is one of interest. It is a logical story, well told, with a logical, heart-interesting, gripping ending. It shows the method of writing a three-reel photoplay melodrama. The story follows:

### *Three-Reel Indian Story.*

"A RESERVATION ROMANCE."

Three parts.

(Western Melodrama)

#### CAST.

<i>Lieut. Hall</i> .....	<i>Of cavalry</i>
<i>Capt. Wolfe</i> .....	<i>Very arrogant</i>
<i>Lucille Blair</i> .....	<i>School teacher</i>
<i>Col. Lyons</i> .....	<i>In command</i>
<i>Alice</i> .....	<i>His daughter</i>
<i>Mrs. Lyons</i> .....	<i>Her mother</i>
<i>Mohawk</i> .....	<i>Indian chief</i>

*Phala* ..... *His daughter*  
*Weetah* ..... *Indian messenger*  
*Cavalrymen, cowboys, Indians, school pupils,*  
*women of post, et al.*

## SYNOPSIS.

*Part One.*

Uncle Sam, in his policy of teaching the Indians to become American citizens, decides that a school teacher is essential to the Big Bend Indian reservation, and Lucille Blair passes the civil service examination and is sent west to take the school. Lieutenant Hall and Captain Wolfe prove rivals for Lucille's love. Colonel Lyons' daughter, Alice, is secretly in love with Hall, and sometimes shows it, but he does not reciprocate. Alice becomes insanely jealous. The attentions of Hall for Lucille become more and more marked. Wolfe, too, grows jealous, and he and Alice plot together. Hall rescues Phala, Chief Mohawk's daughter, from his cruel hands; becomes her friend, which she mistakes, in time, for love. Alice, Lucille and Phala are all in love with Hall. Alice plots, Phala plots; Lucille is the target.

## SYNOPSIS.

*Part Two.*

Lucille Blair takes up her duties at the school, Hall and the teacher becoming more and more attached. Then Alice and Wolfe whisper "scandal" into her ears regarding Hall and the Indian girl. The conspiracy succeeds. Wolfe begins to win his desired end, but Hall will only become a friend to Alice. Phala notes with Indian passion the lack of interest Hall has for Alice. Chief Mohawk owes Hall in revenge for his interference. With his tribe he "jumps" the reservation, taking Hall prisoner. Knowing Lucille's concealed love for Hall, Mohawk sends his Indian messenger, Weetah, to bring her, with the note:

You love white soldier. You can save him.  
 Come with Weetah at once or paleface die.

Mohawk.

In the meantime, Colonel Lyons sends Captain Wolfe and a detachment to search for Mohawk and to rescue Lieutenant Hall. Wolfe, however, doesn't make much of a search, and reports that Mohawk and his band eluded him. The colonel asks: "Did you do your duty?" and Wolfe cannot answer. Mohawk tortures Hall, and decides to kill him by throwing him over a great cliff. Phala trails Mohawk and his band, and because of her great love for Hall, she hastens back to the post with the news. Confronted with

what may be his comrade's death, Wolfe confesses to the "love plot," and asks for a larger detachment; that he will save Hall. The detachment leaves on the hunt for Mohawk. When Lucille reaches Mohawk it is only to find the note was a ruse. Mohawk says:

"You be Mohawk's squaw, I let white man live."

#### SYNOPSIS.

##### *Part Three.*

Remorse grips Alice. She feels now that Hall's death will be attributable to her. She decides to act. Four now are working to save Hall—Wolfe, Phala, Lucille and Alice. But Lucille's efforts are the weakest, because she, too, is coming more and more into Mohawk's power. The Indian chief's plans are succeeding. Mohawk prepares to roll Hall over the cliff—unless Lucille complies with his wish. Hall whispers to Lucille:

"It's your life or mine. The school needs you. I'll go!"

Alice takes Mohawk's trail, locates him and raises her gun to fire, but Phala, her Indian passion afire, the knowledge that Hall is lost to her in her mind, saves her father from death. But, angry at Phala's interference, believing her taking the part of the whites, he resents her attempt at explaining. Then comes Wolfe's chance to prove himself a man. Here's the chance for the making of some man. Wolfe takes the chance. He leaves the detachment, hears a commotion on the cliff-top above, and starts to climb. Phala's love for Hall is again awakened, and she plans to save him. She ties a rope about his body, and hides the coils in the grass, but Mohawk detects her act, and declares:

"Now you both go!"

Wolfe climbs higher and higher. His detachment nears the scene. Mohawk's tribe, not far away, is prepared to rush to his assistance. Mohawk ties other end of rope around Phala, and rolls Hall over the cliff. His weight begins to pull Phala to the cliff's edge. Mohawk rushes to aid Weetah in his struggle with Lucille and Alice. Wolfe discovers Hall's limp body hanging over the cliff; he climbs higher. Phala is dangerously near the edge; Alice grabs up bayonet-pointed gun, jabs it into Phala's dress, securing her to the earth for time being. Lucille gives up hope; she consents to Mohawk's demands. But Wolfe has climbed higher. There is only one way to save Hall. The chance is small—but he takes it. Hurling his bayonet-pointed gun with all his power, it pins Hall, through his clothes, to side of cliff, just as Mohawk slashes the rope binding Phala and Hall together. But Wolfe is not at the top; his gun

is gone. He climbs higher. He reaches Mohawk and a terrific struggle follows—Wolfe against Mohawk and Weetah. Wolfe is proving himself a man. Phala again attempts to save Hall. She whispers to Alice: "Hold onto me while I reach down and get the rope, then we'll pull Hall up." The struggle continues. Alice lets Phala down, but the Indian girl's weight is too much for her, and she screams for Wolfe to catch her. But Mohawk and Weetah see the conditions and hold him back. Lucille uses strategy. Wolfe gets time to ram Alice's gun through her dress, and thus saving the two from going over the precipice. Mohawk's tribe comes into view; Wolfe and the white girls are almost doomed; Wolfe's detachment reaches the scene; Hall is dragged up; he and the girls revived. Mohawk and Weetah are placed under arrest and taken back to the reservation. Alice sees the making of a man in Wolfe and admires him. Hall and Lucille are united, and Phala is taken into Colonel Lyons' household. Lucille's pupils faintly understand, when they arrive at school later to find their teacher and Hall together. Wolfe and Alice and Phala grouped about in an attitude of love. Wolfe has proved himself a *man*.

### *The Action.*

#### LEADER.

#### MOHAWK'S DAUGHTER ADMIRE THE PEOPLE OF THE POST.

#### Scene 1. EXTERIOR, ARMY POST; DAY.

Western characters, soldiers, Colonel Lyons, Chief Mohawk, Phala discovered. Lyons pleased with Phala, admires her; chides her about beaux, indicating boys of post. Phala laughs, bows head. Lyons shakes with Mohawk, then exits, as chief registers *anger* at loyalty of Phala for whites. The chief goes to Phala, grabs her roughly by wrist, *pulling her to her knees*. Hall and Alice enter. Hall catches situation, *grabs chief, takes him to task*; sympathizes with Phala. Alice views proceedings with contempt; chief registers he will get revenge. Wolfe enters. Alice tells him of Hall's actions. He laughs cynically. Chief walks out of scene, followed by Hall, holding arm of Phala. Wolfe and Alice secretly plot.

#### Scene 2. INTERIOR, COLONEL LYONS' QUARTERS; DAY.

Dinner about to be served. Officers and women discovered; Colonel Lyons telling funny story.



**Scene 3. EXTERIOR, NEAR POST.**

Hall and Phala discovered; he talks to her. *Mohawk enters scene. Hall and girl exeunt.*

**Scene 4. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER SCENE NEAR POST.**

Wolfe and Alice discovered; they see Hall and Phala. *Alice plans revenge, registers anger.*

**Scene 5. BACK TO 2.**

All sit down. Hall and Phala enter. Colonel rises, inquires trouble; others interested as Hall explains about chief's treatment of daughter.

**CUT-IN LEADER. THE LIEUTENANT PERSUADES THE COLONEL TO EMPLOY PHALA.**

Back to Scene —. Hall suggests that the colonel keep Phala at post to help other women. Colonel consults wife and others. They agree. Phala is told to stay. Alice enters, views situation with contempt. It is discerned that Hall only wants to be kind to Phala; the girl *watches his every movement, eyes Alice with suspicion.* An orderly enters, hands note to colonel, who reads:

**INSERT. (Letter.)**

Washington, D. C., March 14, 1914.

Colonel Lyons,

Command U. S. Cavalry,

Big Indian Reservation.

Under civil service rules, Lucille Blair is appointed schoolteacher for your district. She should arrive the 19th. Meet her.

Indian Affairs Committee.

Back to scene. Reading of message creates some stir. Colonel picks Hall and Wolfe to meet teacher. They exeunt at once, Hall patting Phala on back. *Alice plainly shows ill-pleasure at Phala's reception.*

**LEADER.****THE TOSS OF A COIN.****Scene 6. EXTERIOR, SMALL DEPOT.**

Mohawk seated, with sullen look on face, discovered. Hall and Wolfe drive into scene. Mohawk looks contemptuously at Hall. Other Indians, cowboys, soldiers enter. Mohawk rises, moves nearer Hall. Hall, Wolfe and others in conversation. Wolfe proposes toss of coin to see which one will escort Miss Blair. Agreed. *Hall Wins; Wolfe shows anger; Mohawk notes this, nudges Wolfe, whispers.* Train enters,

Miss Blair alights, Hall greets her; Wolfe looks on in disgust. Hall and new teacher get into buck wagon and drive out of scene. Wolfe and Mohawk talk together, suspiciously.

LEADER.

THE COLONEL'S  
SPINSTER DAUGHTER GROWS JEALOUS.

Scene 7. AS IN 2.

Colonel Lyons, wife, other women; few soldiers discovered. Hall and Lucille enter. Introductions. *Alice at once registers hatred for Lucille.* Wolfe enters; *shows ill-feeling.* Alice notes this, *goads him.* Hall and Lucille are very friendly. Phala enters. She is not noticed by Hall; she feels this. Eyes Hall *jealously.* Alice notes Phala's watching of Hall. She draws Wolfe's head down, whispers. Wolfe starts. "What?" he exclaims. His face lights up; he nods head affirmatively. Alice cautions silence. Alice and Phala eye Hall most jealously.

LEADER.

TAKING UP HER DUTIES.

Scene 8. EXTERIOR, RESERVATION SCHOOLHOUSE. Indian children, whites and mothers of reservation discovered. Colonel Lyons, wife, Lucille, Hall, Wolfe enter afoot. Lucille is introduced to her pupils by Hall and Lyons. Lucille makes friends quickly.

Scene 9. EXTERIOR, EDGE OF WOODS. Mohawks and Phala discovered. They are in *argument.* Phala refuses to do as father commands; he uses her roughly. She breaks away, runs out of scene.

Scene 10. BACK TO 8. Lucille is congratulated by others. Hall very attentive. Alice is seen to enter slowly. Lyons calls to Alice to join others; she refuses. Wolfe crosses to Alice. She is sullen. Phala enters, looking back toward father, showing fear. Hall crosses to her, realizes something is wrong; talks cheerfully to her; she listens. Alice and Wolfe note this; Alice whispers to Wolfe, "*Now's your chance; tell her.*" Wolfe crosses to Lucille, talks; points to Hall, says, "His relations with her have caused scandal."

CUT-IN LEADER. THE CONSPIRACY SUCCEEDS.

BACK TO SCENE.

Wolfe's words have desired effect on Lucille. He notes this, triumphantly; exchanges knowing look with Alice. Lucille is *shocked*; looks toward Hall and Phala, turns and leaves Wolfe. Wolfe crosses to Alice. Alice happy. Hall crosses to Lucille; *she turns from him*, walks to Lyons and the two enter school. Hall dazed. Looks about, glances at Wolfe and Alice, wisely. Hall braces up, looks about; walks out of scene, refusing to enter school with others, when asked to by Mrs. Lyons.

Scene 11. AS IN 9.

Mohawk discovered. Looks toward schoolhouse. Face lightens up; he sees Hall approaching.

Scene 12. AS IN 8.

Phala opens schoolhouse door, looks about, comes out, gazes wonderingly about; exits quietly.

Scene 13. BACK TO 11.

Mohawk in same attitude. Seats himself. Hall enters, about to pass by, notices Mohawk, pats him on shoulder, good-naturedly; leans down to say, "Don't be angry, Mohawk;" Mohawk quickly *throws both arms about Hall's neck*, pins him to ground. They *struggle*.

Scene 14. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER VIEW OF WOODS.

Phala runs into scene; looks *suspiciously* about; hears noise, espies father and Hall in struggle. She rushes out of scene.

Scene 15. BACK TO 13.

Mohawk has better of Hall. Phala rushes into scene, *pinions father's hands* behind him; Hall struggles to his feet, draws gun, conquers Mohawk. Mohawk sullen; upbraids Phala. Hall interferes, orders Phala back to house; she exits, watching two men. *Hall threatens Mohawk*, then exits.

LEADER.

LATER.

Scene 16. AS IN 8.

School out. Pupils troop out door, followed by Lyons, wife, Wolfe, Alice and Lucille; others. Wolfe talks to Lucille, takes her arm, exeunt from scene. Alice hesitates as others leave. Hall enters scene; Alice stops him; talks, shows

her love for him. She pleads, he registers *he doesn't love her*.

Scene 17. EXTERIOR, VIEW NEAR SCHOOLHOUSE.

*Phala watches Alice and Hall.*

Scene 18. BACK TO 16.

*Alice tries to win Hall's love. He admires her, but does not love her; tells her so. Phala enters scene. Alice takes advantage of this; accuses Hall of relations with Indian girl. Hall angry. Denial. Pats Phala on shoulder, tells Alice he befriends her. Alice scorns idea, laughs cynically; points finger at two in scorn, exits, vowing revenge. Hall now realizes importance of Alice's accusations. Orders Phala to house; she exits at his bidding. Hall exits other way, rapidly.*

Scene 19. EXTERIOR, WOODS.

*Mohawk and band of followers discovered, on horses. They dismount. Leave horses; walk out of scene.*

Scene 20. AS IN 1.

*Lyons, wife, soldiers, others discovered. Wolfe and Lucille enter, arm in arm, are seated, talk confidentially to each other; Wolfe makes impression on Lucille. Phala enters, followed by Alice. Alice nods knowingly to Wolfe. Phala is silent, downhearted. Alice nears her; *pushes her aside as she passes*. Lyons notes this, takes Alice is task; Alice insolent.*

Scene 21. BACK TO 19.

*Indians discovered on knees in grass; watch coming of Hall. Hall enters, is grasped by Mohawk and others; overpowered; led out of scene.*

Scene 22. EXTERIOR, HILLSIDE.

*Troop of soldiers enter leisurely. Hear yells, stop; listen.*

Scene 23. EXTERIOR, VIEW NEAR WOODS.

*Mohawk taunts Hall, who is tied to horse. Other Indians enjoy this. Hall gives several yells. Hall is silenced by Mohawk stuffing handful of grass from the ground at his feet into his mouth.*

Scene 24. BACK TO 22.

*One of men looks toward Scene 23 with glass; recognizes Hall as prisoner of Mohawk. Soldiers stir. Note is written by one man, given to another, who exits, galloping out of scene.*

## Scene 25. BACK TO 20.

Soldier from Scene 24 rides into scene, causing excitement; hands note to Colonel Lyons, who reads:

## INSERT.

Colonel Lyons:

Chief Mohawk and band have jumped the reservation, taking Lieutenant Hall prisoner.  
Jenkins.

## BACK TO SCENE.

Excitement reigns. Lucille's love for Hall is awakened, despite story of Wolfe. Alice shows pleasure in affair. Lyons orders Wolfe to go to rescue. Wolfe hesitates; looks to Alice, then to Lucille. Lucille urges him; Alice indicates, "No." Phala pushes way to Lyons' side; listens, urges Lyons and Wolfe to hurry. Lucille and Alice note Indian girl's anxiety. Wolfe and detachment exeunt.

## Scene 26. EXTERIOR, ROADWAY.

Mohawk and band, with Hall, discovered; going along slowly. Mohawk looks back, see soldiers of Scene 22 coming; urges others onward—faster.

## Scene 27. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER PART OF ROADWAY.

Soldiers from Scene 22 going at rapid gait.

## Scene 28. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER VIEW OF HILLSIDE

Flash Wolfe and detachment.

## LEADER.

## A TRIANGLE OF DESPAIR.

## Scene 29. AS IN 1.

Lucille, Alice and Phala unburden their love for Hall; they all plead with Lyons. Lyons in grip of emotion. Intense feeling wraps Lyons and wife, as Lucille, Alice and Phala plead. Lucille turns and appeals to Phala to have her father relent. Phala is defiant, studies, runs out of scene. Lyons breaks down under strain of attachment of own daughter, teacher and Indian girl for Hall. Lyons is seated, puts arms about daughter and Lucille, wife standing up behind him, her hands on his shoulders, her head resting on his. All weeping, as others try to comfort them. Dissolve into

## Scene 30. EXTERIOR, VIEW OF OPEN FIELD.

Hall is taunted and harassed, abused as Mohawk and others crowd about him. Dissolve.

## Scene 31. BACK TO 29.

## "A RESERVATION ROMANCE."

## Part Two.

LEADER.

MOHAWK ELUDES HIS PURSUERS.

Scene 32.

EXTERIOR, WOODS.

Mohawk and followers, with Hall lying on the ground, discovered. Mohawk *taunts Hall fend-ishly; cuts insignia from Hall's arm*, takes paper from Hall's pocket, writes; *fastens insignia to note*, hands to a follower, describes Lucille, orders Weetah to deliver note. Follower exits, cautiously.

Scene 33.

EXTERIOR, HILLSIDE.

Wolfe and detachment nonplussed. Mohawk has eluded them. Wolfe declares it's *no use to go further*; they exit back to post.

LEADER

HEARTS BOWED DOWN.

Scene 34.

EXTERIOR, EDGE OF WOODS.

Phala discovered, sitting on ground, *sobbing*. Move camera to

Scene 35.

EXTERIOR, EDGE OF WOODS.

Alice, leaning against tree, *sobbing*. Move camera to

Scene 36.

EXTERIOR, EDGE OF WOOD.

Lucille on knees *in prayer; sobbing*.

Scene 37.

EXTERIOR, ROADWAY.

Flash Wolfe and detachment hurrying to post.

Scene 38.

EXTERIOR, ROADWAY.

Weetah from Scene 32 enters, looks cautiously about, exits.

Scene 39.

AS IN 25.

Wolfe and detachment enter. Wolfe relates story of chase and of Mohawk's eluding him. Lyons *shows worry*; paces to and fro. Alice enters, sides up to Wolfe, *whispers to him*. Wolfe shows anxiety. Lyons notices this, scents plot, *demand*s to know of Wolfe if he did his duty; asks:

CUT-IN.

"Did you do your duty?"

BACK TO SCENE.

Wolfe *hangs head*, afraid to answer. Lyons questions him severely, *orders Alice away*, *shows anger*.

Scene 40.

AS IN 32.

Hall and Mohawk discovered. Mohawk *taunts* Hall almost beyond endurance; says:

- CUT-IN. "Teacher must live with big chief Mohawk."  
BACK TO SCENE.  
Hall *struggles to get at Mohawk*. Tense scene.
- Scene 41. AS IN 34.  
Phala discovered. Wipes eyes, *determines to find Hall; hatred in look*, exits, hurriedly.
- Scene 42. BACK TO SCENE 39.  
Wolfe *denies* that he did not do his duty. Alice, aside, listens, *look of satisfaction* on face. Lyons paces to and fro, worried.
- Scene 43. EXTERIOR.  
Weetah discovered. Looks about, espies Lucille, grins triumphantly, exits.
- Scene 44. BACK TO SCENE 36.  
Lucille discovered, still sobbing. Weetah enters, stealthily; *looks at note and insignia*, approaches girl.
- Scene 45. AS IN 32.  
Mohawk has tired Hall out with his taunts, *slaps* him. Mohawk stands in front of Hall, arms folded, *laughs*.
- Scene 46. EXTERIOR, WOODS.  
Phala discovered. She looks, listens, *hears* laugh of Mohawk; hurries out of scene.
- Scene 48. BACK TO 45.  
Mohawk still laughs. Phala enters, listens; she *catches eye* of Hall, *motions silence*, exits.
- Scene 49. BACK TO SCENE 44.  
Weetah talks to Lucille; she fears him. He holds up note and insignia. She is *interested*, *pleads* to know about Hall; thinks from insignia he may be dead. Indian gives her note; she reads:
- INSERT.
- You love white soldier. You can save him.  
Come with Weetah at once or paleface die.  
Mohawk.
- BACK TO SCENE.  
Lucille is terror-stricken. Weetah attempts to *caress her*. She decides to go. Indian exits, taking Lucille by hand.
- Scene 50. EXTERIOR, HILLSIDE.  
Phala discovered, *running, stopping, listening*, hurrying onward.
- Scene 51. AS IN 42.  
Lyons tells Wolfe to take more men and go again. Wolfe hesitates. Alice, aside, *motions*

"No." Phala rushes into scene, Lyons catches her; she *tells* of Mohawk and Hall; Wolfe listens as she describes scene. Dissolve.

Scene 52. BACK TO 45.

Dissolve back to

Scene 53. SCENE 51.

Wolfe begins to *feel he has not done his duty*. Lyons notes this, upbraids him, and Wolfe *breaks down, confessing* the plot of himself and Lyons' daughter.

CUT-IN LEADER. THE CAPTAIN REVEALS THE PLOT.

BACK TO SCENE.

Wolfe *tells Lyons of plot* of himself and daughter. Alice *denies* it, grows furious as father believes young officer. Wolfe promises to find Hall or die, shakes with Lyons, calls men, mounts, carrying gun, and exits, as Lyons looks pitifully at Alice. Phala looks about, exits.

Scene 54. EXTERIOR, OPENING IN WOODS.

Indian followers of Mohawk from Scene 23 discovered, dancing about. Weetah (from Scene 49) enters, *holding and pulling Lucille*. Indian tells others of Mohawk's intentions; others enjoy it; Lucille terror-stricken. Weetah and Lucille exit.

Scene 55. EXTERIOR, ROADWAY.

Wolfe and soldiers hurrying by.

Scene 56. AS IN 53.

Lyons and Alice discovered, father *bending over girl as she sits and sobs*.

Scene 57. BACK TO SCENE 45.

Mohawk has Hall securely bound, lying on ground; he *gloats* over his success; *picks Hall up and carries him out of scene*.

Scene 58. EXTERIOR, ROADWAY.

Wolfe and soldiers halt. Wolfe pairs certain men off to search for Hall. *Decides to go alone, determined to make personal reparation*. Cut scene as Wolfe exits.

Scene 59. EXTERIOR, TOP OF PRECIPICE, OVERLOOKING RIVER.

Mohawk enters, carrying Hall on shoulder; puts him down, standing; *tells him he intends to throw him over precipice to his death*; Hall shudders, *struggles*; Mohawk laughs.



- Scene 60. **AS IN 45.**  
Weetah and Lucille enter. Weetah calls for Mohawk, looks about; calls again.
- Scene 61. **BACK TO SCENE 59.**  
Mohawk *hears* call of Weetah—answers.
- Scene 62. **BACK TO SCENE 60.**  
Weetah *hears* Mohawk answer, *pulls* Lucille after him as he hurriedly exits.
- LEADER.** **REMORSE.**
- Scene 63. **AS IN 53.**  
Alice discovered, alone. Remorseful, she *breaks down* and cries; looks up, decides to go to Hall's rescue, *gets rope and gun*, looks about, exits quietly. Phala enters from opposite side, *watches Alice* until out of scene, runs over to Alice's exit, studies, then exits, following Alice.
- Scene 64. **SOLDIERS FROM SCENE 58 DISCOVERED.**  
Men discuss situation. Cut.
- Scene 65. **AS IN SCENE 2.**  
Lyons and wife discovered; worried. Lyons *pats wife on back as she sobs*; other women *sympathize*.
- Scene 66. **EXTERIOR, HILLDSIDE.**  
Wolfe, standing beside horse, discovered. Looks about, examines earth, gives negative nod, mounts and exits.
- Scene 67. **AS IN 59.**  
Mohawk, Hall, Weetah and Lucille discovered. Lucille *attempts to reach Hall*, but is held back by Mohawk, who takes her by the shoulders, *shakes her* roughly and says:
- CUT-IN.** "You be Mohawk's squaw, I let white soldier live."  
**BACK TO SCENE.**  
Lucille shudders at thought. Hall tries to rise, Weetah kicks at him. Mohawk *pleads* with Lucille, then gets angry; she refuses his request. Mohawk picks up Hall, *starts toward edge of precipice*; Lucille understands, *screams; faints, falls*; Weetah rubs her hands and head; Mohawk throws Hall down, gleam of triumph in eyes as he watches girl, then Hall.
- Scene 68. **EXTERIOR, AS IN 66.**  
Alice enters, looks about, studies, exits. Phala enters, looks after Alice, nods head affirma-

- tively, *gets down on knees*, examines ground, crawls out of scene, dragging gun.
- Scene 69. BACK TO SCENE 67.  
Lucille is revived; Mohawk kneels beside her, tells her she *must be his squaw*; she refuses. Mohawk *drags* Hall to Lucille, they talk; Hall whispers:
- CUT-IN. "It's your life or mine; the school needs you—I'll go."  
BACK TO SCENE.  
Lucille says, "No." Mohawk interrupts them; *drags* Hall toward precipice again, as Weetah *restrains* Lucille.
- Scene 70. EXTERIOR, NEAR SCENE 59.  
Alice discovered; she sees Mohawk and others, shows fear; exits toward them. Phala enters, *crawling*; rises, sees Mohawk and others, amazed; her Indian passion is *aroused*; she *hesitates*, intends to let Mohawk carry out his threat; determination, jealousy on face; *angers her gun*.
- Scene 71. BACK TO 69.  
Mohawk makes one more entreaty to Lucille; Hall *attempts to speak*. Alice enters, *aside*, *listens*, *raises gun at Mohawk*, about to fire. Cut.
- Scene 72. BACK TO 70.  
Phala *sees* Alice about to shoot Mohawk; she *aims, fires*.
- Scene 73. BACK TO SCENE 71.  
Phala's shot *hits Alice's gun*, she drops it; shot causes *commotion*; Mohawk sees Alice; *grabs* hold of her; Weetah kicks at Hall. Intense.
- LEADER. THE MAKING OF A MAN.
- Scene 74. EXTERIOR, SIDE OF RIVER.  
Wolfe discovered. He *hears* shot. Looks about; looks up to top of precipice; *listens, decides to investigate*; dismounts and exits up side of precipice.
- Scene 75. BACK TO SCENE 73.  
Mohawk *abuses* Alice. Phala rushes into the scene; says, "*I saved your life*," to Mohawk; he is angry, *tosses her aside*; she *resents* it; backs off. Mohawk takes rope and gun from Alice, *tosses* rope carelessly at Hall's side; gives gun to Weetah; talks with Lucille again, who still says, "No."
- Scene 76. As in Scene 54. Indians *dancing about*.

**"A RESERVATION ROMANCE."***Part Three.*

- Scene 77. EXTERIOR. OPEN FIELD.**  
Soldiers of Scene 58 discovered; they discuss situation; point to various directions, then all ride out together.
- Scene 78. AS IN 75.**  
Mohawk takes Phala's gun from her. Tells her, "*I am going to throw him* (pointing to Hall) *over the cliff—to kill him.*" Phala shudders; she *realizes her love* for the white soldier. Mohawk *pushes* Phala aside, reaches down, *drags Hall toward top of cliff.* Cut.
- Scene 79. EXTERIOR, SIDE OF CLIFF.**  
Wolfe discovered climbing up, *slowly.*
- Scene 80. AS IN SCENE 1.**  
Lyons, few soldiers and women of post discuss affair. Mrs. Lyons *pleads* with husband to do something; other women sympathize with her.
- Scene 81. AS IN SCENE 78.**  
Mohawk binds arms and legs of Hall much tighter, shoves him nearer edge of cliff, almost too far; Mohawk *grabs him back.* Weetah talks to Lucille and Alice, now seated together. Mohawk leaves Hall, walks back toward Weetah and Lucille. Phala slips close to Hall, bends down, *crawls to loose rope, pulls it toward her,* crawls to Hall, *ties one end of rope around him,* hides balance in grass, pulling it toward tree at side. Mohawk turns quickly, suspicious of Phala, walks to her, *grabs her, spies rope at her feet,* traces it to Hall. Mohawk *gets an idea.* Tells Weetah to guard other girls; grabs Phala, ties other end of rope about her body, says, "*Now, you both go.*" Lucille and Alice *see intentions* of Mohawk, and protest, to no avail. Mohawk *ties Phala completely,* hand and feet; motions that *she go over cliff with Hall.*
- Scene 82. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER VIEW OF CLIFF-SIDE.**  
Wolfe *climbs higher.*
- Scene 83. EXTERIOR, TOP OF HILL.**  
Soldiers from Scene 58 discovered, looking over country. One uses glasses; *sees Mohawk and others* at top of cliff; others look. Wolfe seen climbing up side.

- Scene 84. THROUGH GLASSES (CLOSE UP).  
*Wolfe is seen climbing up cliff.*
- Scene 85. BACK TO SCENE 83.  
*Soldiers discuss matter, then dash out of scene.*
- Scene 86. AS IN SCENE 81.  
*Hall and Phala, bound tightly, begin to cause Mohawk trouble by rolling and turning. Lucille and Alice begin to harass Weetah; he can hardly manage both of them; Mohawk rushes to aid him, throws guns aside, twists wrists of both girls until they cry for mercy. Phala and Hall roll closer together, Mohawk turns, notices this, rushes toward them. Cut.*
- Scene 87. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER VIEW OF CLIFF-SIDE.  
*Wolfe climbs higher, listens, examines gun; climbs.*
- Scene 88. BACK TO 86.  
*Mohawk is pushing Hall over precipice. Cut.*
- Scene 89. EXTERIOR, OPEN FIELD.  
*Soldiers from Scene 58 ride hurriedly by.*
- Scene 90. BACK TO SCENE 88.  
*Hall is over cliff. Phala is being dragged toward edge by weight of Hall's body. Lucille and Alice now battle with Weetah. Mohawk rushes to aid him. Cut.*
- Scene 91. EXTERIOR, EDGE OF CLIFF.  
*Hall discovered hanging over, getting lower and lower.*
- Scene 92. BACK TO SCENE 88.  
*Phala's body is drawn nearer, by jerks, to edge of cliff. Mohawk and Weetah struggle with Lucille and Alice.*
- Scene 93. EXTERIOR, ANOTHER VIEW OF CLIFF-SIDE.  
*Wolfe listens, hears noise above (to side) and climbs higher.*
- Scene 94. BACK TO SCENE 88.  
*Alice has secured one of the guns (with bayonet attached), wards off Weetah, who wields knife. Lucille, on knees, before Mohawk, agrees to his request; Mohawk calls Weetah to him. As he leaves, Alice gets idea, jabs bayonet end of gun through Phala's dress, thus securing her from being dragged over cliff. Lucille throws her arms about Mohawk, pleadingly.*

- Scene 95. **EXTERIOR, TOP OF CLIFF, TO SIDE OF MOHAWK.**  
Wolfe's head appears above cliff, he comes into view, almost exhausted. He looks about, sees Mohawk and others; sees Hall dangling over cliff; *he is amazed*. Studies situation, *gets an idea*. *Fixes bayonet on gun*, intends to aim at Hall, piercing coat and nailing him to cliff until help can come; almost gives up, then his nerve returns as he aims. Cut.
- Scene 96. **BACK TO SCENE 88.**  
Mohawk, with *knife in hand*, rushes toward Phala, sees she is held by bayonet-gun in ground. *Studies*, then *slashes rope*. Cut.
- Scene 97. **BACK TO SCENE 95.**  
Wolfe *hurls gun* with all his might, then covers eyes with his hands, afraid of result.
- Scene 98. **BACK TO SCENE 91.**  
Hall's *body gives lunge*, rope sags—gun from hands of Wolfe pierces clothes of Hall, nailing body to cliff; rope is seen to fall from top, hanging down below.
- Scene 99. **BACK TO SCENE 97.**  
Wolfe sees his *aim has been good*; gives sigh of relief, catches breath, *looks toward Mohawk* and others, starts to run out of scene. Cut.
- Scene 100. **BACK TO SCENE 80. (FLASH.)**
- Scene 101. **BACK TO SCENE 88.**  
Mohawk in *struggle with Phala*; Weetah with Lucille and Alice.
- Scene 102. **EXTERIOR, ROADWAY.**  
Flash soldiers of Scene 58 on gallop.
- Scene 103. **BACK TO SCENE 88.**  
Mohawk, Phala, Weetah, Lucille and Alice in struggle. Wolfe enters. *Starts at Mohawk*. Cut.
- Scene 104. **BACK TO SCENE 76.**  
Indians are now seated on ground.
- Scene 105. **BACK TO SCENE 101.**  
Struggle still on.
- Scene 106. **BACK TO SCENE 98.**  
Flash Hall's body hanging.
- Scene 107. **BACK TO SCENE 105.**  
Lucille is *exhausted*. Wolfe proves too much for Mohawk, and Weetah joins in fight, leaving Phala and Alice free. Phala *crawls to edge of*

- precipice*, looks over, is amazed at seeing Hall's body; calls Alice; *motions*; Alice starts. Cut.
- Scene 108. BACK TO SCENE 106.  
Flash Hall's body hanging.
- Scene 109. BACK TO SCENE 107.  
Wolfe has knocked Weetah down; *struggles* with Mohawk in desperate hand-to-hand battle. *Phala gets idea*, whispers to Alice: "Hold me over the cliff, I'll get rope and we'll pull Hall up." (*Business of Phala letting herself over edge*), Alice holding onto dress.
- Scene 110. BACK TO SCENE 108.  
Show Phala being *lowered* almost within reach of Hall and rope—rope dangling down.
- Scene 111. BACK TO SCENE 109.  
Mohawk and Wolfe still in struggle; Weetah is coming to his senses. Lucille too weak to aid, almost faints. Alice holds onto Phala, but *she begins to slip*—Phala's weight is *too much* for her, she *screams* for Wolfe.
- Scene 112. Close-up of Alice *losing her balance*—screaming for aid.
- Scene 113. BACK TO SCENE 111.  
Wolfe *hears* Alice, but Mohawk holds him back; *frantic struggle*—tense. Cut.
- Scene 114. BACK TO SCENE 110.  
Phala's body *seen to jerk*, Alice *can't* hold her. Phala reaches for rope—*just misses it*, reaches again and again. Cut.
- Scene 115. BACK TO SCENE 104.  
Indians rise, confer, *listen*, *start to run* out of scene. Cut.
- Scene 116. BACK TO SCENE 113.  
Wolfe getting better of Mohawk; they near Weetah (who is about to rise to aid Mohawk), Wolfe *kicks out*, knocking Weetah to ground again. Alice *still losing ground*; she calls frantically for help. Wolfe can't save her and keep Mohawk off. *He gets idea*. Trips Mohawk, throwing him to ground, runs for gun (with bayonet attached), *drives it through Alice's dress*, thus securing her to ground; Mohawk sees this, *rushes* at Wolfe. Cut.
- Scene 117. BACK TO SCENE 114.  
Phala *reaches rope*, grabs it, calls to Alice. Cut.

- Scene 118. **AS IN SCENE 74.**  
Soldiers of Scene 58 enter. Look about, discover *noise above*, dismount, scatter to climb cliff. Cut.
- Scene 119. Close-up of Alice *pinned to ground* by gun; she *struggles* to pull Phala up.
- Scene 120. **BACK TO SCENE 116.**  
Mohawk and Wolfe in *battle*; clothes of each being torn to shreds; Weetah again rises, is about to aid Mohawk, when Lucille trips him by catching one of his feet as he leaps for Wolfe; Weetah *dashes for Lucille*. Cut.
- Scene 121. **EXTERIOR, ANOTHER PART OF CLIFF.**  
Flash soldiers climbing up.
- Scene 122. **AS IN SCENE 32.**  
Indians from Scene 115 gather. Hesitate, then *start to rush away*. Cut.
- Scene 123. **AS IN SCENE 95.**  
One soldier *appears*, head above ground, begins to climb up. Cut.
- Scene 124. **BACK TO SCENE 120.**  
Lucille prostrate; Mohawk and Wolfe still battle. Weetah sees Alice pulling Phala up, *rushes toward her*. Cut.
- Scene 125. **BACK TO SCENE 123.**  
Soldier is in full view; looks about, *starts* for Scene 124. Cut.
- Scene 126. Close-up of Weetah beginning to *pull gun from Alice's dress*, to let her *go over cliff*. Cut.
- Scene 127. **BACK TO SCENE 124.**  
Battle on. Soldier from Scene 125 *rushes* into scene, *grabs* Weetah. Cut.
- Scene 128. **BACK TO SCENE 117.**  
Close-up of Phala *holding onto Hall*.
- Scene 129. **BACK TO SCENE 127.**  
Soldier and Weetah battle; Mohawk has Wolfe on ground. Cut.
- Scene 130. **BACK TO SCENE 95.**  
Several soldiers climb over edge, *start to run out of scene*. Cut.
- Scene 131. **BACK TO SCENE 129.**  
Mohawk and Wolfe on ground; Weetah and soldier *struggle* together. Indians from Scene 115 *rush into view*. Cut.
- Scene 132. **AS IN SCENE 1.**  
Mrs. Lyons' head on husband's shoulder, *sobbing*. He talks to her; assures her. Cut.

- Scene 133. **BACK TO SCENE 131.**  
Indians aid Mohawk and Weetah. Wolfe and soldier held. *Mohawk makes dash for Alice*—soldiers from Scene 130 rush in; fight follows—a terrific struggle. Cut.
- Scene 134. **AS IN SCENE 95.**  
Other soldiers appear, start to rush out of scene. Cut.
- Scene 135. **BACK TO SCENE 133.**  
Battle rages. Soldiers from Scene 134 enter, Indians are subdued. Wolfe *rushes back toward Alice*. Cut.
- Scene 136. **BACK TO SCENE 117.**  
Phala *holding onto Hall*, others above pulling Phala up.
- Scene 137. **AS IN SCENE 126.**  
Close-up of Phala and Hall *being brought over edge*.
- Scene 138. **BACK TO SCENE 135.**  
Mohawk and Weetah together, guarded by soldiers.
- Scene 139. **CLOSE-UP OF MOHAWK AND WEETAH.**
- Scene 140. **BACK TO SCENE 138.**  
Hall has been unbound, comes to his senses, Wolfe *bends over him*; Lucille rubs his head and hands; Alice appreciates just how much of a man Wolfe has been; Hall *pats Phala on head*, as Indian girl bends over him.
- Scene 141. **CLOSE-UP OF SCENE 140.**
- Scene 142. **BACK TO SCENE 140.**  
All move out of scene, Hall supported by Alice and Wolfe, Lucille with Phala.
- Scene 143. **AS IN SCENE 1.**  
Colonel Lyons *paces to and fro; very uneasy; hears noise outside*; calls wife, she enters. All from Scene 142 enter. Greetings. Story of Wolfe's and sacrifices of Phala and Alice told. Phala is taken in charge by Mrs. Lyons, as Colonel *orders Mohawk taken out of scene*.
- Scene 144. **AS IN SCENE 8.      LATER.**  
Hall and Lucille sit in doorway, Phala at their feet; Wolfe standing on one side, Alice on the other—all indicate happiness. Children from Scene 8 troop into scene, *throwing flowers at those in doorway*. Fade out.

THE END.

(Editor's note.—Dummy is to be substituted for Hall at Scene 88.)



*Defining Multiple Reels.*

The action of this story may be followed by the reader by closely watching each scene, noting every *leader* and *cut-in*, and studying carefully the italic words and sentences. For the amateur, it is advised that *all* the italically-written words and sentences be stricken out of this scenario, and then write it over, putting in such action as he or she thinks it should have; then apply the "picture eye," and see if it makes a thrilling melodrama. Practice is a wonderful thing to elevate the new writer, and no better time will be found to do this than when the writer is new—when he needs it most.

Because a story may be written and termed a three-reel subject by the author is no indication that it will run 3,000 feet in its portrayal. It may be "cut" in the taking, or it may be "cut" down in the cutting department, for there may be a number of scenes that have consumed too much time; there may be some that could be eliminated entirely without lessening the value of the story; however, not many professionals write unnecessary scenes. At times one scene may be given a little more time in order to bring out a better sequence, and, again, one situation may be allowed one minute by the director, where the author had counted only on thirty seconds, and vice versa. Only the professionally-experienced photoplaywrights

can come the nearest to perfection as to the number of scenes to be filmed.

*Realism in Adjustment.*

The author should *go through* his own story, scene for scene and action for action, timing each situation, each *insert*, every *leader* and *cut-in*; beginning at a fixed time by the watch, *acting* and *seeing* out the play, remembering it takes fourteen to seventeen minutes per reel. If the action goes longer than that it must be remedied *some place*, but be careful just *where*; if it can be "done" in nine minutes, it needs adjustment, but the adjustment must be in *realism*—not in *padding*.

*A Two-Part Drama.*

Another example of the multiple reel picture play is given in "Fogg's Millions." This is a highly dramatic scenario, well written, and with sufficient charm and interest, plot and denouement to warrant its classification as a character of the subject mentioned. In this story, a young adventuress, regardless of her marital relations, determines to get possession of Fogg's millions. She succeeds through her pretended love for the millionaire, but at the same time she has a husband living. Later, the old man finds his young bride in the arms of another, and the intensity and excitement brings on a stroke from which he dies. All the way through the story, heart interest and sympathy, either for Fogg's relatives or the other characters in

the story, are brought out. The story contains elegant sequence, has a strong "punch," and demonstrates the power that can be woven into a picture play production. As a straight dramatic subject, study it carefully from the introduction of the first synopsis to the finale of the story. Note also that this, as a dramatic subject, moves slowly, only sixty scenes being required to produce it, very few of them *flash-backs* or short scenes. The story follows:

**"FOGG'S MILLIONS."**

(Two-part Drama.)

By Elizabeth R. Carpenter.

(Produced by the Vitagraph Co. of America.)

**CAST.**

*Melville Loring.*

*Grace Marvin.*

*Jim Marvin.*

*Wm. Fogg.*

*Mrs. Fogg.*

*Milly Fogg.*

*Peter Fogg.*

*Dr. Jack Manly.*

*Nurse, valet, clerk, maid, policeman, hospital attendants, chauffeur, etc., etc.*

**PART ONE.**

**SYNOPSIS.**

Old Peter Fogg, uncle of William Fogg, has a stroke, and is ordered to the seaside by Dr. Jack Manly, who is in love with Wm. Fogg's daughter, Milly. Milly, however, is in love with Melville Loring, whom Jim Marvin, now Wm. Fogg's gardener, believes to be the man that eloped with his (Jim's) wife. Jim tells Manly of his suspicions, and Milly overhears him. Grace Marvin learns of Peter Fogg's being a millionaire, and scheming, scrapes up an acquaintance with him.

## SCENES OF ACTION.

**LEADER.** DR. MANLY IS IN LOVE WITH MILLY FOGG.

**Scene 1. DRAWING ROOM WILLIAM FOGG'S HOME.**  
Milly Fogg and Dr. Manly are seated together. William Fogg and his wife are in another part of the room chatting. Dr. Manly shows that he is love with Milly, but she treats his advances lightly. Melville Loring is shown in by the maid and Milly immediately goes to him. She is impressed with this fine-looking man of the world. Loring shakes hands all around. Dr. Manly has noticed the gladness with which Milly went to Loring, and shows a natural jealousy, though he shakes hands with him. They all chat amicably, Milly keeping by Loring's side and Dr. Manly constantly looking in their direction.

**LEADER.** MR. PETER FOGG, MILLIONAIRE, HAS A STROKE.

**Scene 2. EXTERIOR OF PETER FOGG'S MANSION—STEPS, ETC.**

Peter Fogg, old and feeble, enters from mansion, assisted by valet and nurse. He testily waves them away, and descends steps slowly, with the aid of a walking stick and the balustrade. The nurse and valet follow behind him on either side.

**Scene 3. DRIVE OR SIDEWALK WITH LIMOUSINE CAR.**

Peter Fogg slowly approaches car. Chauffeur is holding door open. Fogg is about to enter car, when he staggers and falls into the arms of his valet. Chauffeur quickly closes the door of the car, goes to valet's assistance. They take Fogg toward steps.

**Scene 4. ENTRANCE OF MANSION AS IN 2.**

Valet and chauffeur take Fogg up steps into the house. Nurse opens door for them.

**Scene 5. FOGG'S BEDROOM.**

Valet and chauffeur bring Fogg in, followed by nurse. They place him on the bed. Valet gives chauffeur quick instructions. Chauffeur exits hurriedly.

**Scene 6. EXTERIOR OF MANSION AS IN 2.**

Chauffeur comes out quickly, gets in limousine and drives away.

Scene 7. **EXTERIOR OF WILLIAM FOGG'S HOME.**  
Limousine enters. Chauffeur gets down quickly, goes up. Stops, rings bell and is admitted.

**LEADER.** WILLIAM FOGG LEARNS OF HIS UNCLE'S STROKE.

Scene 8. **DRAWING ROOM AS IN 1.**  
They are all seated as in scene 1. Maid enters and tells them that Fogg's chauffeur wishes to see Mr. Wm. Fogg. She is told to admit him. He enters, hat in hands, and hastily tells them what has happened, indicating Dr. Manly is to go at once. Mr. Fogg and Dr. Manly leave together. All have been interested, listening. Loring looking away with a smile and a cunning meaning on his face.

Scene 9. **EXTERIOR OF WM. FOGG'S HOME AS IN 7.**  
Chauffeur comes out followed by Fogg and Manly. Two latter enter car. Chauffeur mounts, drives away.

Scene 10. **FOGG'S BEDROOM AS IN 5.**  
Fogg in bed. Nurse and valet are in attendance. Knock. Valet goes quickly to door, admits Manly and Wm. Fogg. Former questions nurse and goes to bedside. Wm. Fogg looks very concerned. Dr. Manly sounds Fogg's heart and feels his pulse. Fogg slowly opens his eyes. William smiles and says some cheery words. Old Fogg is very irritable. Manly writes prescription, gives it to nurse with instructions. Says a few cheerful remarks to the old man and leaves with William, who says, "Good-bye," in return.

**LEADER** LORING WINS THE HEIR TO PETER FOGG'S MILLIONS

Scene 11. **DRAWING ROOM AS IN 1.**  
Loring and Milly are seated together. Loring makes love to her. She is shy. He proposes, and she bashfully accepts him. She girlishly throws her arms around his neck and kisses him. Mrs. William Fogg enters. She tells her mother, who kisses Milly and shakes hands with Loring. They exit together.

**LEADER.** JIM MARVIN MEETS WITH AN ACCIDENT.

Scene 12. **STREET SCENE.**  
Jim is seen walking slowly along, looking about. He has a tired and forlorn expression. He suddenly starts and stares at something coming in the road. An auto appears with

Grace inside. Jim darts into the roadway to attract her attention, but another auto coming from the opposite direction knocks Jim down. Auto stops and Dr. Manly and William Fogg get out quickly. With the aid of policemen and chauffeur, put Jim in the car and drive off, policemen accompanying them.

Scene 13. EXTERIOR OF HOSPITAL.

Dr. Manly and William Fogg arrive with Jim. They take him into hospital, escorted by others.

Scene 14. WARD OF HOSPITAL.

Jim, on wheel stretcher, is brought into ward and placed on a bed around which an orderly puts screens. Jim's head is bandaged. Dr. Manly, William Fogg, interne and nurse are in attendance. Dr. Manly questions Jim, who weakly answers him.

CUT-IN. "I saw my wife, who has deserted me, and I ran to speak to her."

Manly puts thermometer in Jim's mouth and feels his pulse. He talks to William Fogg. He takes thermometer from Jim's mouth, nods his head approvingly.

CUT-IN LEADER. WILLIAM FOGG OFFERS JIM A POSITION AS GARDENER.

They talk of Jim, and William Fogg suggests that Jim, on coming out of hospital, become his gardener. Dr. Manly agrees and asks Jim if he would care to accept the position. Jim, with a feeble smile, accepts. They all show pleasure, and exit, leaving nurse in attendance, to whom Dr. Manly gives some instructions.

LEADER. DR. MANLY LEARNS THAT HE IS TOO LATE.

Scene 15. DRAWING ROOM AS IN 1.

Milly and Dr. Manly enter. He takes her hands and tells her that he loves her. She starts away in surprise and tells him that she is already engaged to Melville Loring. He shows astonishment, then dejection. She says that she is sorry to have to hurt his feelings. He says "good-bye" to her, shakes hands and leaves. She looks very sorry to have caused him pain.

LEADER. JIM LEAVES THE HOSPITAL.

Scene 16. HOSPITAL WARD SAME AS 14.

Jim is seen dressed. He is almost strong again. Manly enters with Wm. Fogg. Doctor asks Jim

if he is feeling well. Jim says, "Yes." Fogg renews his offer to Jim, who accepts. They leave together. Jim shakes hands with the nurse.

**Scene 17. EXTERIOR OF WM. FOGG'S HOUSE AS BEFORE.**

Jim, Dr. Manly and Wm. Fogg enter, exit into the house.

**Scene 18. WM. FOGG'S HOUSE—REAR—GARDEN.**

Milly and her mother are seen walking in the garden. Milly is laughing and happy. Fogg, Manly and Jim come out of the house and approach them. Jim is introduced as the new gardener. He takes off his cap. Mrs. Fogg asks him if he is feeling strong now, and Jim answers, "Yes." She shows him the garden with her husband. Milly and Manly exit slowly into the house.

**Scene 19. PETER FOGG'S BEDROOM, AS BEFORE.**

Fogg is seated in an armchair. Nurse and Dr. Manly are present. Old man is grouchy and Manly endeavoring to cheer him.

**CUT-IN. "You must go away to the seaside for a few weeks."**

Manly gives cut-in to which Fogg heartily agrees. Valet enters, and Fogg tells him to pack as soon as possible. Manly tells him that Fogg must get away as soon as possible to the seaside. valet nods and exits. Manly shakes hands with Fogg and leaves.

**LEADER.**

**JIM REMEMBERS LORING.**

**Scene 20. EXTERIOR OF WM. FOGG'S HOUSE—GARDEN AS BEFORE.**

Jim is attending to plants and flowers on the veranda. Loring and Milly come out, say goodbye, and Loring goes down the steps. Just as he is going, he looks up, raises his hat and exits. Milly goes into the house. Jim, who has been watching Loring, starts violently and stares after Loring, with a very *intense* expression. He slowly raises his fist and shakes it after Loring. Turns to door through which Milly has gone, then once more toward Loring, nods and says to himself, "I understand your game." Exits slowly around side of house.

**LEADER.** MR. PETER FOGG LEAVES FOR THE SEASIDE.

**Scene 21.** EXTERIOR OF FOGG'S MANSION, AS BEFORE.

Fogg comes out, assisted by valet and nurse. He is carefully wrapped up and appears weak. Footman follows them with bag and grip.

**Scene 22.** SIDEWALK OR DRIVE AS BEFORE.

Chauffeur is holding door of limousine open. Peter Fogg is carefully helped in. Peter Fogg is folloyed by nurse and valet. The footman puts grips by chauffeur, who drives away.

**LEADER.** PETER FOGG ARRIVES AT THE SEASIDE.

**Scene 23.** EXTERIOR OF FASHIONABLE HOTEL.

Grace is seen laughing on the veranda with a gentleman on either side of her. They are laughing and chatting. Old Fogg, valet and nurse drive up (either in carriage, taxi or hotel omnibus). Valet gets out, followed by Fogg and nurse. Porter takes luggage. They all exit into the hotel. Grace and her friends laugh after they have entered.

**Scene 24.** CORNER OF VERANDA, SHOWING SIDE OF WM. FOGG'S HOME.

Milly is seen sitting around the side of the house. She is intently reading.

**LEADER.** JIM LEARNS WHO LORING IS.

**Scene 25.** SAME VERANDA, SHOWING FRONT OF HOUSE.

Jim is seen watering and pruning ferns and flowers on veranda. He slowly comes towards corner where Milly is sitting. Loring enters up steps with Manly. Loring enters house, but Manly, seeing Jim, comes toward him. Jim quickly indicating the door through which Loring has gone, asks Manly, "Who is that man?" Manly tells him that Mr. Loring is Miss Milly's fiance.

**CUT-IN.** "I feel certain he is the man who stole my wife."

Jim gives cut-in. Manly is thunderstruck at accusation and questions Jim, who tells him why he suspects Loring. Cut to

**Scene 26.** AROUND VERANDA AS IN 24.

Milly is sitting up, horrified expression. Cut to

**Scene 27.** FRONT OF VERANDA AS IN 25.

Jim and Manly are seen talking earnestly. Jim says:



- CUT-IN.** "If ever I can prove it, I'll shoot him down like a dog."  
Jim fiercely gives cut-in, shaking his fist toward the door. They both exit in that direction, talking earnestly.
- Scene 28. SIDE OF VERANDA AS IN 26.**  
Milly sitting with a look of consternation on her face, suddenly bursts out crying, dropping her face in her hands.
- Scene 29. FASHIONABLE HOTEL OFFICE.**  
Grace is seen standing by desk when Peter Fogg is wheeled by, accompanied by his nurse. Grace smilingly asks the clerk who he is.
- CUT-IN.** "That is Mr. Peter Fogg, the millionaire."  
Clerk gives cut-in. Grace immediately interested. She slowly exits in the direction taken by Fogg, thinking deeply.
- Scene 30. ENTRANCE OF HOTEL AS IN 23.**  
Fogg is wheeled out on veranda. Grace comes out and walks by his chair, sits in folding chair close to him. Fogg has magazine in his hand which he drops. Grace picks it up and hands it back to him. He smiles and thanks her. She smiles at him. The old man seems quite impressed with her, starts a conversation. Grace turns her head away, a cunning smile on her face.

*End of reel one.*

## FOGG'S MILLIONS."

### PART TWO.

#### SYNOPSIS.

Grace is now on very good terms with old Peter Fogg. He proposes to her. She consents and marries him. Loring, on learning that his old friend and sweetheart has married the Fogg millions, breaks off his engagement with Milly and goes to the seaside to Grace. Old Fogg catches Loring and Grace in a love scene and during a violent quarrel has another stroke, from which he dies. Later, Grace returns to town and the announcement of her marriage to Loring is made. Jim, in a fit of rage, goes to the house with the intention of shooting Loring, and recognizes his wife. He determines to allow the wedding to take place, and later has her arrested for bigamy. Milly marries Dr. Jack Manly, and their child becomes the heir to Fogg's millions.

*Scenes of Action.***Scene 31. VERANDA OF HOTEL AS IN 30.**

Grace and Peter Fogg are on very good terms. She is laughing and chatting and he is enjoying her society. Nurse comes to say it is time for him to go in and starts to wheel his chair. Fogg gets very annoyed and irritable, tells her sharply to leave him alone, as he prefers to stay where he is. Smiles at Grace, who laughs and nods back. They continue chatting. Nurse leaves them with annoyed expression.

**Scene 32. WILLIAM FOGG'S GARDEN AS IN 18.**

Jim is seen working. Milly, with her father and mother, enter. Milly is looking sad, is on verge of tears. Her father puts his arm lovingly, asks: "What is the matter?" She turns suddenly to her mother and dropping her head on her breast, bursts out crying. Mrs. Fogg leads her slowly away. Mr. Fogg looks puzzled. Jim rises from his work, and touching his cap, asks Mr. Fogg if he may speak to him. Fogg says "Yes." Jim, with a look of hatred on his face, explains his idea of the situation.

**CUT-IN.** "The man she is engaged to is a scoundrel. He robbed me of my wife."

Jim, with intense feeling, gives cut-in. Fogg shows surprise and asks him what he means. Jim explains. Fogg, very thoughtful, looking extremely worried, slowly exits. Jim looks sorrowfully after him, shakes his head and resumes his work.

**LEADER.** GRACE CAPTURES MR. PETER FOGG.

**Scene 33. VERANDA AS IN 31.**

Peter Fogg is helped out of the hotel by his valet and nurse. Grace is with him. Old Fogg is placed in a chair. The valet and nurse exit. Grace tucks rug around him, seats herself at his side. He looks admiringly at her, and as her hand is on the arm of his chair, he places his upon it, talking earnestly to her. She smiles and chats pleasantly to him. He takes her hand in his, and leaning toward her, asks her to marry him. She bashfully refuses, but he is persistent. She shyly asks him if he really means it. He says, "Yes," and once more presses her to say yes. She consents. He shows great joy, then tells her to keep it quiet, to which she consents. He kisses her hand.

**LEADER.**

**A SHOCK FOR THE FOGG FAMILY.**

**Scene 34. WILLIAM FOGG'S DINING ROOM.**

Milly, with her father and mother, are at breakfast. Mr. Fogg is reading morning paper. He sees something in paper which causes him to jump up out of his seat, his face showing great excitement. His wife and daughter, in surprise, ask him what is the matter. He quickly gives paper to his wife and points out paragraph. Milly goes behind her mother's chair, reads over her shoulder.

**INSERT.**

**NEWS ITEM.**

Seaport society received a great surprise yesterday on learning that Mr. Peter Fogg, the well-known millionaire, had married Miss Rita Deane, an actress.

Back to scene. They are all exceedingly upset and annoyed at the news. Fogg throws the paper down on the table in temper and disgust.

**LEADER. LORING LEARNS THAT THE GIRL HE BROUGHT FROM THE COUNTRY IS NOW HEIR TO FOGG'S MILLIONS.**

**Scene 35. CLUB SMOKING ROOM.**

Loring is smoking and reading. Walter brings him a drink, which Loring tells him to charge to his account. Walter exits. Loring drinks, continues reading. Sudden start. He looks closely at the paper as he reads. He rises quickly, showing intense excitement. Looks at paper again.

**INSERT. NEWS ITEM SAME AS IN 34.**

Loring slowly raises his eyes from paper, an intent look in them. Dissolve into

**Scene 36. WOOD SCENE.**

Loring and Grace are seen sitting on a fallen tree. She has her arm around him. He is pressing her to him and kissing her. Dissolve back to

**Scene 37. CLUB ROOM AS IN 35.**

Loring thinking deeply. He sits, slowly nods head, a cunning smile on his face.

**Scene 38. BOARDWALK.**

Peter Fogg enters, leaning on Grace's arm. She places him in chair and tucks rug around him. He takes her left hand and looking lovingly at the wedding ring, kisses it and smiles at Grace. The old man looks very happy. Grace turns away, knowing smile on her face.

**Scene 39. VERANDA OF WM. FOGG'S HOME AS IN 25.** Mr. and Mrs. Fogg, Milly and Dr. Manly are sitting on the veranda chatting. Fogg has a paper and is excitedly discussing his uncle's marriage, banging paper with his fist. The others are listening intently, though Milly has a rather sad look. Mail carrier comes up steps, gives Milly letter and exits. Milly looks eagerly at the writing. A look of foreboding comes over her face. She asks them to excuse her, quickly opens the letter and reads. With a cry of pain she buries her face in her hands. They all look surprised at the distress and her mother asks what is the matter. Milly hands her the letter, which she reads.

**INSERT.**

Dear Milly: During the last few days your manner toward me has changed, and I feel that something has come between us. Under these circumstances, it is better that our engagement should cease.

Yours,

MELVILLE LORING.

Mrs. Fogg is enraged, and, taking Milly in her arms, exits slowly into the house. Fogg, who has taken and read the letter, passes it to Dr. Manly. The latter can scarcely conceal his joy.

**CUT-IN.** "I think we are lucky to be rid of him."

Mr. Fogg gives cut-in to Dr. Manly, who heartily agrees, and they slowly exit into house.

**LEADER.**

LORING LEAVES TOWN—

**Scene 40. RAILROAD TERMINUS.**

Loring, with grip, is seen boarding train.

**LEADER.**

—AND ARRIVES AT SEAPORT.

**Scene 41. SAME AS 30.**

Loring enters, goes up steps and exits into hotel.

**Scene 42. WM. FOGG'S GARDEN AS IN 18.**

Milly and Dr. Manly are seen walking in the garden. Milly looks depressed and Manly is trying to cheer her. Jim is tending some flowers. They approach him. He cuts a bloom and, taking off his cap, offers it to Milly, who smiles and thanks him as she accepts it. Jim cuts another, which he offers to Dr. Manly as a boutonniere. The latter thanks him, and handing

the flower to Milly, asks her to put it in his coat. She does as he asks, and they exit smiling. Jim looks after them, nodding approval.

**LEADER.**

**WHEN OLD FRIENDS MEET.**

**Scene 43. HOTEL VERANDA AS IN 30—EVENING.**

Loring is seen seated, smoking. Grace comes out of hotel looking very bored. She goes to sit when she sees Loring. He rises quickly and goes to her. She is delighted to see him again and they shake hands heartily. They sit down beside each other, talking earnestly.

**CUT-IN LEADER. GRACE TELLS LORING HER FIRST  
HUSBAND IS DEAD, AND THAT  
SHE HAS MARRIED PETER  
FOGG, THE MILLIONAIRE.**

Grace explains cut-in to Loring and shows him her wedding ring. He pretends not to have heard of her marriage and congratulates her. She looks toward hotel entrance with sneering expression, tells Loring how terribly bored she is with Fogg already. He takes her hand and tries to cheer her up. They are soon laughing and chatting on the best of terms, Grace showing plainly how happy she is to see him again. Cut to

**Scene 44. HOTEL SITTING ROOM WITH BEDROOM  
BEYOND.**

Peter Fogg is asleep in a chair. Nurse in the bedroom. Fagg wakes up, and the valet, who is also present, attends him. He is very irritable and looks around as if expecting to see Grace. Is disappointed at not finding her. Valet helps him to rise and takes him into the bedroom.

**Scene 45. SITTING ROOM, WM. FOGG'S HOUSE.**

Dr. Manly is seen making love to Milly. He is ardently pressing his suit and finally wins Milly's consent. Takes her in his arms and kisses her.

**LEADER.**

**PETER FOGG IS JEALOUS.**

**Scene 46. HOTEL VERANDA AS IN 30—EVENING.**

Loring is seen lounging against porch, smoking. Grace comes out, leading old Fogg, who is walking with aid of a stick. Loring and Grace exchange significant looks which Fogg observes, unknown to them. He is suspicious. Loring

exits into hotel, and after Grace has made Fogg comfortable in chair, she makes excuse, follows Loring. Fogg, with an expression of jealousy, looks after her.

**Scene 47. HOTEL GROUNDS.**

Loring is seen waiting. Grace joins him. They exit from the scene.

**Scene 48. HOTEL VERANDA AS IN 30.**

Peter Fogg, with a look of jealous anger, rises with difficulty, and slowly hobbles into hotel.

**Scene 49. ARBOR IN HOTEL GROUNDS.**

Loring and Grace arm in arm, enter and sit in arbor. He takes her hands and kisses them. Makes love to her. Cut to

**Scene 50. GROUNDS AS IN 47.**

Peter Fogg, with the aid of his stick, hobbles into scene. He is looking very angry. He slowly exits in direction taken by Loring and Grace.

**Scene 51. ARBOR AS IN 49.**

Loring and Grace earnestly talking. He puts his arm around her and draws her to him. She throws her arms around his neck. He presses her to him and they kiss. Fogg enters and confronts them. He is furious and violently denounces Grace. Loring and Grace rise quickly. Fogg approaches Loring with threatening attitude. Raises his stick, is about to strike him when he staggers, drops his stick, clutches at his throat and falls. Loring and Grace quickly attend to him, but see at once that it is no use—the old man is dead.

**LEADER:**

NEWS OF FOGG'S DEATH.

**Scene 52. WM. FOGG'S SITTING ROOM AS BEFORE.**

Mr. and Mrs. Fogg, Dr. Manly and Milly are present chatting. Maid enters with telegram which she gives to Fogg and exits. He opens. Reads:

**INSERT.**

Mr. William Fogg,  
250 S. Street,  
New York, N. Y.

Sorry to inform you that Mr. Peter Fogg  
died suddenly last night. Rita Fogg.

Mr. Fogg tells them contents of telegram. They show surprise and Mr. and Mrs. Fogg shake their heads, as much as to say, "He brought it on himself." Dr. Manly takes Milly's arm and they slowly saunter off.

LEADER.

SIX MONTHS LATER.

Scene 53. VERANDA OF MR. FOGG'S HOME AS BEFORE.

Jim is seen tending flowers. Mr. and Mrs. Fogg are seated. Fogg is seated. Fogg is reading newspaper. Mrs. Fogg crocheting. He starts and shows her paragraph.

INSERT (News Item):

The marriage of Melville Loring and Mrs. Rita Fogg, widow of the late Peter Fogg, will take place on the 21st inst. from the city home of the bride.

She shows disgust and hands him back paper, which he throws down in disgust. They exit into house. Jim picks up paper and reads. Face expresses hatred and he registers oath as he crunches paper. Exits.

Scene 54. SAME AS 2. EXTERIOR—PETER FOGG'S MANSION (NIGHT).

Limousine drives up and Loring gets out. Hands Grace out. She is heavily veiled and dressed in widow's weeds. Jim comes upon scene, but neighbor sees him. They exit into house. Jim's face expresses anger.

Scene 55. SPLENDIDLY FURNISHED DRAWING ROOM. Grace and Loring enter. She quickly throws off her veil and looks around room in admiration. Goes to Loring and says, "All this is ours." He kisses her. Cut to

Scene 56. GARDEN, PETER FOGG'S HOME (NIGHT). Jim is seen slowly approaching window, looking around cautiously. Takes gun out of pocket and looks carefully at it. Goes close to window.

Scene 57. DRAWING ROOM AS IN 55. Grace has her coat and hat off and is laughing and chatting with Loring. They are near the window. Cut to.

Scene 58. GARDEN OF FOGG'S MANSION AS IN 56. Jim looks through window. As he raises his gun, exclaims:

CUT-IN. "Great heavens! My wife!"

Jim starts back in horror, his eyes wide open, his face expressing excitement and surprise. He gives cut-in. Looks through window again. Raises gun and takes aim. Slowly lowers it again as an idea comes to him of a better plan for revenge.

**LEADER.** JIM HAS DIFFERENT PLAN FOR REVENGE.  
Jim thinks deeply. He nods "yes." An amused and artful smile over his face as he shakes his fist at the window, slowly exits.

**LEADER.** THE WEDDING DAY  
**Scene 59.** (Denouncement of this scene should be either at the church door after the ceremony or as the couple approaches the altar for the ceremony.)  
Jim comes on scene at crucial moment, denounces Grace.

**CUT-IN LEADER:** GRACE IS ARRESTED  
AS A BIGAMIST.  
Denounces her as a bigamist. She is arrested by police officer. Loring leaves hurriedly, a look of fright coming over his face as he sees Jim.

**LEADER.** THE REAL HEIR TO FOGG'S MILLIONS.  
**Scene 60.** SITTING ROOM WM. FOGG'S HOME AS BEFORE.  
Mr. and Mrs. Fogg, Milly and Dr. Manly and Jim are all present. Milly has a baby on her lap and they are all admiring it. Jim is allowed to approach and look at the heir of Fogg's millions.

*The End.*



## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE POWER OF THE STORY.

**T**HE power of a story simply means the writer's ability to weave into it a human appeal which will make it not only interesting, but convincingly real. The power of imagination is not sufficient to enable an author to write a human appeal story unless the imagination goes further and couples itself with truthfulness, because all the characters of a human interest story should be natural and true to their lives and environment. Each character in a story with power to move the audience, one full of heart interest, must be an individual; he must be supplied with actions and manners characteristic of that sort of an individual. It is neither natural nor plausible to make this character assume peculiarities which belong to other roles, even though he be a lead and the others simply auxiliary players.

Logic, too, is one of the elements necessary in writing a powerful photoplay; just as illogic is one of the common errors made by amateur writers. Logic, then, should be made one of the strong points in photoplay writing.

Power can be put into a story only where the writer is able to get his characters into a complex situation, an interesting place, get them to

a point where the suspense is dramatic and get them out again with a sequence that is logical.

*The Power of Interest.*

After the power that is to be woven into a scenario is discovered and the fact or essential is fixed in the mind of the writer and the introduction of the story is mapped out, the leading characters should be brought into the scene and should be kept before the audience as much as possible, introducing incidental characters only when necessary to convey more plainly the idea or germ of the play in which the principals are always the main object of interest. But in this introduction and during this strain of action, complication is to be avoided where it becomes a part of the action sufficiently strong enough to destroy the power of the story. The play should be made clear, distinct, appealing, full of the necessary heart interest, strong, plausible and practicable. Yet all these things to keep the power of the story to the fore must be linked with the vitally necessary action, one of the greatest essentials; then comes clearness of depiction. The power of the story and the power of the plot, while they have a close relation, are separately incorporated because the power of the story is the immediate interest the story arouses, the plot holds the interest of the spectator only at that place where the suspense is greatest, but at the same time the plot of the story may be discernible from the time of its

introduction. As the story is being written for photoplay production, one must remember that actions are taking the place of words, and this action must be written bearing the fact in mind that they are aiding the camera to present to the public a silent portrayal as the people would witness it were they attending the legitimate theater. But even as the power of a story can be overdone, so has the camera its limitations.

### *Story Characterization.*

Characterization enters into the building up of power in the story, although some producers have overlooked this feature to some extent, but it means much to the audience; it tends to grasp and hold the attention from the beginning to the end, it creates a longing for human interest throbs and plainly depicts the form of presentation welcomed by theater patrons just as much so as it was appreciated when Naturich in the "Squaw Man" found her little boy's slippers on her pathway to the place where she later ended her life, and these little slippers, the symbol of mother and childish love, immediately aroused interest and renewed the human appeal that might have begun to lag had the story not had these points. A little study of characterization, to be used in every scenario, is a thing to be desired because it will aid in creating the power that makes interest in the story, because symbolism is a thing around which there lies many possibilities, and since the char-

acters of a moving picture play cannot speak, means should be employed to plainly portray the action and intent which it is desired the spectators should catch and understand. As an illustration, the only son of a widowed mother goes to the city for employment; his intentions are the best and he means to be a man in every sense of the word. Accidentally, in packing up, perhaps, his mother's little white apron is carelessly tossed into his trunk. Time goes on and the son has reached the city and he falls immediately into evil ways through bad companionship. Back home the mother is in suspense, for the letters from her son are growing less frequent. She does not know what has become of her little white apron, but that little white apron of mother's bobs up and it brings to the boy in the city memories of mother and purity, and through what was a piece of carelessness he was caught "on the precipice" as his eyes glanced at the apron. It is simple symbolism characterized.

### *Story Symbolism.*

Again, perhaps the son has left home on account of a quarrel; he leaves hurriedly and angrily, and in his haste he forgets his watch in which are inscribed these words: "From Father to Son." The father, perhaps, has been angry and irreconcilable, but the mother picks up the watch and as the father sees the words inscribed on the case, what was considered an

oversight by the son in leaving his watch by mistake, turns out to be a symbolic point in the creation of heart interest in the story and especially the more impressive this becomes when the words are *flashed* to the audience by the use of *close-up* action. There are many ways in which symbolism can be effectively introduced to add to the power of the story, and this is a point which should be most carefully studied by every scenario writer.

The power of a story must include unity of impression, for it must leave with the audience something characteristic of the story, and if there is no power to the story there is no impression. The audience must be held from the start to the finish, from the minute the situation arouses interest throughout the unfolding of the plot, the logical development of the theme and the action of the indispensable *climax*; and the *crises* throughout the story are not to be forgotten.

### *Dramatic and Epic Angles.*

Curiosity is an element that might well enter into the creating of the power in a story and yet curiosity without some plain point of attack is not sufficient. Curiosity alone does not create interest, only for the time being where it might be applied to some extent in the making up of the story. Either one of the two general plans for forming interest and power must be used, the dramatic that shapes all action and events toward a strong, dramatic

climax, and the epic which means the arranging of them in an order as they might occur in the actions of the characters. The logical function of incident must be considered; emotional appeal and purpose, defined with motives and acts, must become a part of the story; the lagging and uninteresting elements must be revived with a test of character-action; the fancy must take on additional visions and a realism injected that will increase the power of the story to a point of dramatic satisfaction, even though it may be unable to miss the criticism of those whose training make it possible to see weakness for which the author may have sacrificed mood or motive; but if the story is so charmingly interesting to the many it is evident that it contains an appeal that gives it power, and the inspiration that created the germ of the story has developed sufficiently to enable the writer to accomplish better things in the building up of other stories.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE CURIOSITY OF A STORY.

**T**HE curiosity of a story is the inference of mystery—anything that will arouse the interest of the spectator to a degree where he will wonder in amazement the outcome of the story, the coming of the next scene, the next action of a character, the explaining of a difficult situation and the pith of the plot that is to come to him as the film moves on, is the attractive thing that will arouse curiosity where heretofore only complacent attention was manifest. Once the curiosity is aroused the interest must be held throughout. Many beginners make the mistake of after arousing the interest, they drop it at an inopportune place, and once dropped it is a difficult thing to be picked up and matched again and woven into the plot with an equitable sequence. Sensationalism does not mean curiosity, but the clean story with heart interest and an expressive touch is the feature that masters in the art of photoplay writing.

#### *Thrill and Thrillers.*

Sensationalism is synonymous with thrill, yet thrill can be injected into a dramatic production without resorting to the "leap-for-life"

idea or the invention of a theme wherein the character dangles from a treacherous precipice in imminent danger of being dashed to his death by the villain above who is about to cut the rope. The fact is that in this kind of a scene the cut-back and flash must be resorted to in order to create the suspense necessary to carry such action. The audience knows in the depiction of this sort of a scene about what to expect; they do not expect to see the man lose his life, but rather they know that the villain will be kept from cutting the rope. There is hardly any curiosity there, there is no unexpectedness and, therefore, the suspense, without any cut-backs and flashes would be wavering.

### *The Strongest Appeal.*

The strongest appeal to the emotions of man is made through curiosity and interest, but the effective point should not be held long, for if retained too long it loses its power. In bringing the story up to this effective point it must be done without the audience knowing *how* it is done. It may be done slowly or quickly, but when it presents itself it must be in such a manner that the interest and curiosity is almost startling in its effect.

The author of the "Mary" introduced and utilized such effective interest, sentiment and curiosity in the story that in the five crises and climax of the story he cried as he wrote them, and the story that can touch the emotions of the author can reach the feelings and



touch the heartstrings of the spectator. An author can not visualize and write the woes and sorrows of a character unless by visualization he can live as that character and mentally suffer the same woes and sorrows during the construction of the plot. There is a capacity in the mind of every writer for interest, sympathy and curiosity and to get the best result, this capacity must be taxed. The writer can throw himself into the story with all the vividness he wishes the audience to understand; although bewilderingments and obstacles arise in the story, there must and does occur that which goes further in holding the attention of the people—sympathy, interest and curiosity, and the writer who has done this has unconsciously become an impressionist, for he has laid at the door of the moving-picture theater-goer all the dramatic efforts that are scheduled and necessary for a dramatic production.

### *Handling the Subject.*

Technique can be acquired; plot must be born and with the birth of the idea must come the genuineness that will enable the writer to put that element of curiosity and interest into the story that will arouse and sustain, almost on the edge of excitability, the suspense that will necessarily follow such a handling and treatment of the subject.

In the "Mary" story, the girl, the ambitious, indulgent, restless, innocent daughter of the

Armstrongs, simple country folk, leaves her old home and marries a rich broker in the city. Modern methods and modern amusements creep into her life in the city to a point where they overshadow and make her forget her home ties and the environment surrounding her old life. But the old folks become tired and weary; they long for the company of their only daughter, and so, leaving their farm, they write to Mary of their coming visit. They reach the city and arrive at Mary's palatial residence, even before their letter. They enter the avenue home while the daughter is entertaining her wealthy friends.

*Touching To Tears.*

Embarrassment is plainly marked on the faces of Mary and her husband, but more evident in the features of the old folks. Tears stream down the mother's face as she compares the clothing of herself and husband to those of the guests assembled. Immediately there is a *heart touch*, actions speak louder than words, the author has made the intent so vivid that no leader could tell it better. Then comes curiosity and interest. The richly-gowned women stand almost in amazement, their eyes riveted on the simple country folk standing bewildered before them. A butler is summoned and the old couple is guided to a bedroom. There their old lamp, a much worn Bible and the mother's work-basket are taken from their carpet bags and laid gently down—the symbolism of a simple ef-

fectiveness. The butler stands with a cynical smile, but the smile turns to sympathy as the mother buries her gray head on the breast of her white-haired husband. They realize the difference between their simplicity and the display and gorgeousness of her daughter and guests.

*Increasing the Interest.*

The interest has increased when the butler, by implication, attempts to say something, but the tears choke back his words and he leaves the room, closing the door softly behind him as the old father opens his much used Bible and reads—"Blessed be the meek for they shall inherit the earth." Downstairs the coming of the old folks and their plainness have had their effect on the party. Later, Mary's husband becomes financially involved and faces failure. The old folks, stealing away from their daughter's home at midnight, hear the husband reveal his circumstances to his wife. Then and there, arousing additional interest, they decide that even though their daughter almost disowns them, they will make a sacrifice to save her husband. They do it in such a way that the curiosity and interest aroused and suspense is overwhelmingly effective. The daughter is made to see the error she has made and a few days later finds the old people back in their home dreaming of the happy days past and yet looking forward to the inevitable losing of their home through sac-

rificing it for their city daughter. Here curiosity reigns supreme; the author can not let the daughter and husband in the city live in their extravagance leaving the old folks to drift for themselves without home or money.

*The Finishing Touch.*

The author cannot permit the story to end there. On one side, the parents are ready to leave for the infirmary and on the other Mary and her husband, the recipients of money from an unknown source that enables the husband to meet his obligations, are living in luxury. The interest and curiosity continues. Something happens—it is the unexpected. Through circumstances and situations Mary visits a real estate office where lying in front of her, symbolic of the sacrifice made, is the deed of her parents' farm. She realizes then from whence came the money which saved her husband from failure. There is a crisis there, sympathetic and real, forceful and appealing. The interest is still sustained; Mary and her husband realize the perilous position in which they have placed the old folks. They hurry back to the old farm, find Mary's parents contented with the past, feeling secure for the future because they have each other and because they have done unto their daughter as they would have wished to be done by. The sun sinks behind the hills, the last rays sifting in through the windows cast a reflection of happiness on the faces of the old folks. The door opens, Mary and her husband

have come to make restitution—Mary has come home.

The closing of a story with interest and curiosity still held as an expression of sympathetic emotion is simply the result of preceding action and the more capable the author becomes of introducing and sustaining these elements, the better opportunity that author has of selling his stories.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### TIMING THE STORY

THE question is frequently asked by new writers: "How can I tell how many scenes to write and how long will my story run?" The amateur writer can not tell until he learns by experience; the old writer has learned that way, and yet, he, too, is not always sure his story will be produced as he wrote it, for much depends upon the *production* and how the director *sees* the story. As a rule, drama is written with a less number of scenes than a comedy. But only a *close application to the rules of the studios* and their *requirements* will furnish what the author wants to know regarding how long his story is and how long it will take to show it. Careful visualization will come as near perfecting a story's time as anything.

It is an excellent plan for the writer to *play the story* as he writes it, as he *visualizes*, for that will help to do it, then *act it out*, after the first draft has been made, for in this way the action can be timed, scene scene.

#### *An Example of Time.*

We will take a scene from "A Million Dollars," say scene nine. *Watch the action* and the *time consumed in showing it*.

**Scene 9. INTERIOR DRUG STORE.**

Clerks on, pinning currency over fountain, stuffing it into glasses, between bottles, etc. Customers enter, all with handfuls of money. Fullers enter. Mrs. Fuller almost exhausted; he seats her, orders drink. Clerks refuse, saying: "We don't need to work." Fuller pulls large roll of bills from pocket, offers it for drink; he is refused, money is scorned by clerks. Fuller leads wife out door. Clerks scatter money about; they are happy.

That scene ran just one minute. Fifteen such scenes would run fifteen minutes, and thus a thousand feet of film would be required, but there would not be fifteen scenes requiring the same time to each one. Some may run thirty seconds, others may require two minutes. Then there are *flashes* and *cut-backs* to use, which only consume but a few seconds. So it is difficult to tell just how many scenes a story will require—the writer must learn it himself so he can apply his picture eye to his own individual story, and thus measure the time and number of scenes by the story's demand of the same.

*The Slow Action.*

Another scene from a dramatic photoplay may be given as a measure of time and action, scene twelve from "The Soul's Revolt." The action of this scene *moves slow*. Follow it carefully, and notice that it has an effect that if it were moved faster, its interest would be lessened. The slow action of a character sometimes bespeaks of the touching effect it has on an audience. In this story, Bryant's servant, John, is the means of a business man going back

to his mother and sweetheart, after he had been weaned away by the press of his business matters and the lure of chorus girls.

Scene 12. INTERIOR BRYANT'S ROOM.

Bryant and John enter together, John talking earnestly to Bryant. Bryant steadies himself by "bracer" from sideboard. John shakes head sympathetically, understands his employer's weakness. Bryant orders John to get box from sideboard drawer—(business of John opening drawer, getting box, opening and handing currency to Bryant). Lawson and girl enter doorway, beckon Bryant to hurry. John pats Bryant on back, whispers to him. Bryant shoves him away and walks toward Lawson and girl. John thinks of letter, grabs it from table, opens and runs to Bryant, letter open, and shakes his arm, reading:

INSERT. PART OF LETTER.

and while I know you have been busy all these years, I know you haven't forgotten your mother and Molly. Molly is waiting, and we want you to come, son. Mother.

BACK TO SCENE.

Bryant sobers up, thinks. John *pleads*, still holding letter. Lawson and girl laugh, cynically, then exeunt. John *leads* Bryant to big arm chair, *seats* him, *takes off his shoes*, *strokes his head*, etc., talking sympathetically to him. Bryant *takes letter from John's hand*, *reads*, *breaks down and sobs*. John has made him see his error, and says:

CUT-IN. "You will go home, won't you—to your mother?"

BACK TO SCENE.

Bryant promises, holds hand to John, who takes it as he wipes the tears from his eyes.

This scene ran two minutes and forty seconds. It could not have been "put on" in any less time. The character of John was created as an old servant, faithful, even slow, but one who took his time, studied, and had the interest



of his employer at heart; his was not the part of an ordinary butler—he was more than a servant. The action of Bryant may have been played faster, but that of John, to have its effect, had to be that of the real John. The entire story was shown in nineteen scenes, twelve, sixteen and nineteen consuming more than two minutes each.

### *What Time Means.*

Time is an essence of a photoplay. No matter how many feet of film a story requires, if it has plot and requires 100 scenes to “put the story over,” the director will do it. But what use is there in writing fifty scenes when half that many will tell the story; why use 1,000 feet of film when 800 would be sufficient? All these are things the aspiring author *must learn*, and they can be learned only by experience—by entering upon the writing of scenarios in earnest, not as a joke or “just-to-try-my-hand” idea of the art, for the writer who does not go into it with the intention of conquering and overcoming every obstacle will never write a story that will sell for more than ten dollars—and ten dollars is *no price* at all.

### *How To Time Action.*

After a story is drafted, the author should go over it very carefully, eliminating the unnecessary action and wording. Then, starting with the first scene, time the story, each scene separately, from beginning to end. To measure the

story, enact the first scene, beginning at 2 p. m., for instance. Close the watch, and go on through the play. Open the watch and see what time it has required to *act out* the story. If it has taken twenty minutes, it is too long and if only twelve minutes, it is too short. Of course, the writer must understand that this given time and measurement apply to examples only. All stories are not 1,000 feet in length per each reel; some run more and many run less. Judgment must be used.

Comedy action is much more rapid than drama, and in this, more scenes are, generally, required. Take a scene from a "chase picture"—"His Hoodoo Day," and watch how quickly a scene is enacted.

**Scene 16. EXTERIOR, RAILROAD TRACK.**

Hand-car seen on track. Eph rushes into scene, out of breath, sits on car, mops head, laughs. Takes bite of cake, turns head, sees officers coming, gets up on car, and starts out of scene as officers enter. Officers watch him, then rush out of scene.

The time of that scene was twenty seconds. It could have been cut to less, but no doubt the director let his "stop watch" work a little over-time. In this story there were over fifty scenes, and it was only a split-reel subject, running about 650 feet. Some farce comedies run over eighty scenes to the story, but the action is of necessity *fast*.

*Action and the Eye.*

The eye is quick and detects and *reads* the picture-told story much more readily than it

does the written story. Every picture story should be studied by its author until he is satisfied it is as near correct as his ability will permit his making it. The amateur should write and compare his stories with the screen plays he can see each day and night, until he can regulate the time of action and number of scenes in equal demand to the story's worth.

The moving picture theater is an excellent instructor for the writer. If possible, get into the operator's booth, where you can work, undisturbed; keep your watch and mind busy, use a pencil, make notes of things you don't understand, and then find out what they mean. *Don't talk to the operator*, he knows nothing about the making of the picture; study the screen, the introduction of characters, the *leaders*, their time; watch the unfolding of the plot; time the *inserts*, see how long it takes to read each one, make a memorandum of each and everything in the story—*scene, leader, insert and cut-in*; study them all over—time after time—when you get home; try to see the same picture several times and measure and count every time. All the technical points can be acquired by the writer who wants to acquire them.

### *Judgment in Action.*

When a story is returned, marked "Too short" or "Too long," don't "make up" a lot of scenes just to add them to it. That isn't lengthening it the way the editor wants it. If it is too long, don't "chop" out a scene here

and a scene there, but be careful *what* you eliminate. The newspaper editor, in cutting down a story, does not simply draw a line through a few sentences here and there, but he "cuts" the story so it reads smoothly still, leaving in the essential parts. Temper "cutting out" scenes and "making up" with judgment.

Begin the study of scenario writing by acquiring the "knack" of writing *necessary action* only, and time and experience will take care of the number of scenes and the length of the story. Measure the value of the plot *first*, then write *just what scenes will tell it*.

## CHAPTER XX.

### APPLYING THE TECHNIQUE.

ONE of the most important things for the photoplay author to learn is the proper applying of technique and knowing where an *insert* is needed, a *leader* required, a *cut-back* necessary and a *flash* called for and where a *bust* or *break* should be placed. All things are not to be learned or acquired in a short time by any writer, and before the photoplaywright can expect to be classed with the professional writer, all the elements, subjects and technical terms of photoplay writing must be mastered. The principles and methods of photoplay writing are much more easily defined and learned than are the principles that apply to the legitimate stage, and yet in the analysis of the ordinary photoplay of the amateur such stories lack the proper placing of technique. It is not a question of the author's *acquiring* the technique; rather is it the question of the author being able to *place it properly*.

Technique must be applied in a logical manner and it cannot be used without a thorough examination and analysis of the story of which it must become a part. Exercise by the way of writing and rewriting and revamping and self-criticizing is a very good way to learn just how

scenes should be divided, where *leaders* are necessary and where other parts of technique and principles should be used.

*Consider Story First.*

A great many writers make the same mistake of concentrating all their effort and power of thought on the development of the plot, thereby forfeiting and sacrificing technique. While the author has said that "plot without technique will sell, and technique without plot will not," yet a better price is commanded if the two are linked together, but the application of the principles of technique must be intelligently acquired by the author in order to do so.

In the applying of studio technique, one must first take into consideration the story itself as to the theme and its material, the division into scenes, the action, unity, sequence, suspense, unexpectedness, crisis and climax. And, after these are conceived in the mind of the author, the next thing that must be taken up is the technique itself in order to put the story together intelligently, to *break* the scenes, to show *exit* and *entrance* and to more plainly convey *by action alone*, the intent of the story.

The action of a play simply means the gesture of a character or the various actions of different players whereby the plot of the story is told and advanced, while the "business" of the play is the action showing a character or characters doing or *registering* a certain thing. As the story advances plot is unraveled, the

plot being subject to changes to interest the spectators; it must be presented with a controlling power and interest coupled with the other necessary elements of photodrama production—suspense, crisis, denouement, “punch” and climax.

### *Titling the Story.*

Whether the author considers the title first or plot first matters little as long as he is able to concentrate and work out the theme of the story. However, the giving of the title previous to the writing of the play is preferable, the title being followed by the cast of characters, the cast by synopsis, and this by the scenes of action. The theme of the story, of course, has now been worked throughout the play because the plot was based upon the theme, the subject or idea of the story, and if the proper technical effect has been applied it will speak for itself. But in any event, the subject or idea should come first in the mind of the writer, although this may be modified to some extent as it appears to the particular individual.

The proper place and only place a *flash* can be used is by referring back or glimpsing a few feet of a scene, *insert*, part of a letter, telegram or note which should be used to identify one part of a story to another and a *leader* which should always precede a scene, must only be used where it will convey an explanation impossible to give in action and it should be brief and terse.

A *cut-in leader* can be inserted into parts of a scene in place of being placed before a scene, but in the applying of the technique it may be so stated on left-hand side of the sheet just what it is, whether it is a *leader* or *cut-in leader*.

The *cut-back* can only be used in repeated returns to a scene or character and if handled properly it can be utilized to create suspense.

To show a small section of a scene or to enlarge an object, character or any other part of the story, the word "*bust*" is applied, which technically means the magnifying of the subject.

#### *What Development Means.*

With a proper introduction of the plot and the correct application of the technique to carry the story, the average writer need have no fear of the outcome of the story, provided, of course, that the plot has sufficient merit to balance.

In arriving at this part of the technical preparation of the story, the writer must not forget condensation, for one of the principle reasons for the applying of technique is *to attain a condensed story*.

The development of the story rests entirely with the author, whether technique is applied or not, but a story cannot be well developed without the proper technical effects that will put the story into proper scenario form for studio submission. Any story with a *leader* misplaced, an *insert* in an uncalled-for situation, a



*bust* or *break* used where not needed and a story with too many *leaders* or unnecessary *leaders* will immediately stamp the work of the author as an amateur in the studio; it means that such a story must be revamped at the cost of originator of the plot because of the fact that the story will not bring the price when constructed so as not to meet the studio's requirements.

The proper division of scenes is another principle that most amateurs fail to grasp. Each time the camera must be moved, requires *another scene*. If a scene is located in a large dining-room, the camera may be unable to focus the entire room; part of the action may be taken at one time and part at another, and such being the case, the camera must be moved to take *two* different pictures. Then such scenes are technically written for *two* scenes, because the camera being limited in its scope *has* had to be moved. The same thing applies to a street or perspective, although a camera can follow a character by *panorama* for some distance, and the proper applying of technique in a situation of this character is important.

### *The Proper Terms.*

There has been probably more abuse of *inserts*, *leaders*, *cut-backs*, *flashes*, etc., than there has been intelligent application of them, but this has been solely on account of the author's inability to grasp technical meaning and to

know exactly where and how certain terms should be applied. The average amateur writer knows such terms exist and thinks that they *must* be embodied in their story whether the story requires them or not. This, then, is where this treatise should be carefully studied by the amateur writer in order to ascertain *when* and *where* these terms should be applied and *where they should not*.

Every writer, professional or amateur, must condescend to the fact that technical knowledge of photoplay writing is important. Every successful writer was once a beginner and the future successful photoplaywright must now begin, and the closer both of them look into and consider the proper applying of technique to any sort of a story, whether comedy or drama, will find that the same rudiments that obtain in the legitimate also apply to the screen productions. There can be no mere assumption in photoplay writing any more than there can be in successful short story or legitimate play-writing.

The art of photoplay writing is unquestionably an interesting one and it is all the more interesting when the author learns to apply technique in the proper place.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE RETURNED STORY.

THE writer who becomes discouraged over a few rejections will never become a successful photoplaywright. There are many reasons why stories are rejected and the author should know *what* to write and what *not* to write in preparing for this work. Even after the photoplaywright has mastered all the technical elements of photoplay construction, it does not necessarily follow that his stories will immediately become salable—far from it. Rejected and returned stories do not necessarily imply lack of merit; there are many reasons why an author's story may be returned and the writer who does not measure this rejection philosophically and figure out in his own mind some plausible reason for rejection will immediately become discouraged and think that preference is being shown for the work of other writers, while such is *not the case*. The demand of a studio varies. The company may be in the market to-day for sea stories and next week for comedies, and the submission of photoplay scripts should not be done haphazardly or promiscuously, for releases must be studied, as there is an *average* to be struck somewhere as to the classification of the various studios' wants. A good story

should go the complete rounds of every reputable producer. Stories have been known to sell on first submission, others have traveled about until they became so defaced and marked that they had to be rewritten, and immediately upon their being re-submitted they have proved salable. This is not coincidence—it is fact.

*Recognizing Capable Writers.*

The time is coming when every reputable studio will keep a record of the name and address of every recognized photoplaywright, and each author will be asked to submit from week to week a list of his stories, together with a brief prologue, and then, as a certain subject is desired, the author who has that particular kind of a story will be asked to submit it. This will eliminate to a great extent the reading of a vast mass of unavailable scripts, plotless plays and worthless subjects.

Photoplay writing offers an unlimited field for the writer who can originate, and as the photoplay-making business more and more adopts a systematic method of handling scripts and releases, so much more must a photoplaywright systematize his work, so that when the time arrives both, the author and producer, can combine to simplify the work.

The reconstruction of a story may spell its availability. Every time a story comes back from a studio the author should study it to see if it cannot be improved. If he is satisfied,

through his "picture eye," that the story is as perfect as he is able to make it, it should continue on the rounds. It should be submitted to at least twelve to fifteen companies. If it be returned from the fifteenth, the rewriting of the plot might be advisable. A new dress, a new title, a new situation, or a different climax may so change the story that it will prove acceptable on the next submission.

### *Patience and Experience.*

No author should become discouraged over rejection slips, whether this be a "sideline" work or his vocation. It takes time, patience and experience and the longer the writer is in the "game" the better fitted he becomes to withstand rejection slips and the better qualified he becomes to *improve* his stories so that they will not be rejected. Every story, of course, is not salable. There is no professional writer that sells all his work, and the professional of to-day was the amateur of yesterday.

Emerson urges all to use what we call fortune. He says, "Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel rolls. In the will, work and acquire and thou hast chained the wheel of chance, and shall always drag her after thee." Some new writers call scenario writing fortune until they perceive one or two plays coming back home, and then they term it failure. Emerson might be quoted

further, for what he says applies so fittingly to discouraged writers, "the voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks . . . see the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency." No writer can succeed by following the zigzag course unless he gazes along the perspective.

### *Cause of Many Failures.*

The cause of many failures in photoplay writing may be attributed to the desire of professional men, merchants, stenographers, clerks, students and maids to augment their income by turning to the scenario field, believing that through the advice of critics and authors who have succeeded in the work, they, too, will become successful. They never made a greater mistake—unless coupled with the desire to write is a vivid imagination, a creative mind and the ability to learn. Many are the failures who survey the future with a pessimistic glance, and many are they who look back, honestly acknowledging photoplay writing "was not as easy as I imagined it was."

Cause and effect are never considered by new writers. All that is thought of is—*success*, the word they are farthest away from because they are peculiarly unfitted to meet it. Ideas come and go, but the unsuccessful photoplaywrights are those who fail to *observe* plots and ideas when presented, and thus the stories they do write are such that they never catch "the call

of the studio," and are, therefore, the rejected ones.

The writer who originates a salable story *has caught his own theme*, and he is the only one that can find the unlocked gateway to the scenario editor's office. No one can advise a writer other than to criticize and put him on the right road, once the critic knows such a writer *has* the ability; but no one can invent *plot* for the writer, the one thing *lacking* in ninety-nine per cent of returned photoplay manuscripts.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### VISIONS, DISSOLVES AND MASKS.

**T**HE object of dissolves and visions, which prove very effective at times in the writing of picture plays, is to have them used for dream purposes, referring back, or to strengthen the intensity of the action. Technically, visions are indicated in two ways. The first is by masking the camera or double printing so that the vision that the character sees *fades* into one corner of the scene and then *fades* out. The other is where the entire scene dissolves into the vision and then the vision dissolves back into the scene.

A dissolve generally constitutes a separate scene, which means that the particular scene where the character sees a vision is divided into two scenes, as, for instance:

- Scene 10. INTERIOR PARLOR.  
Mary registers intent thought and gazes into space. Scene fades into
- Scene 11. EXTERIOR FARMYARD.  
Green (Mary's father) leans against barn door. Mary at his side. Fade back to scene 10.
- Scene 12. SAME AS IN SCENE 10.

#### *Placing Fades Illogically.*

Where one scene *fades out* and not into another—*fade out* should be written at the end of such a scene.



It is not an altogether wise thing to resort to visions and dissolves. The more common use of the vision is where it is desired to bring out in a part of a story some event in the past life of the character that has a direct bearing on the action in a particular scene. The new writer must be careful in arranging his scenes and scene-plot, for certain uses must be numbered.

Scenes using *fade in* and *fade outs* are sometimes used in place of leaders. If a scene shows a character or characters leaving one scene, a home, for instance, en route to a city, unless there has been a note, letter, telegram or some *insert* or *cut-in* to denote *where* that character or the characters are going, a *leader* would have to be used to explain; but a *fade* could be used here if the story's action is *plain enough* to have the audience understand the intent and destination.

### *Proper Use of Fades.*

The use of *fades* and *dissolves* is not to be discouraged, but their *proper* use is urged. Ordinarily, many writers resort to *visions* to carry the value of the story, because they are unable to create sufficient plot, interest, complication and situation any other way.

It must be understood that if the writer desires to "*vision*" a scene where it affects a character, as in a dream, for instance, it may be shown by calling for its presentation,

through double exposure or dissolve, in either of the upper corners of the picture, or even elsewhere, so long as it is in the scene. *Fade in* and *fade out* are *not* the same as applied to visions. Refer back to the fades in the 10th, 11th and 12th scenes, showing "Mary," and compare those with the *vision* idea as an example with the following:

Scene 6. INTERIOR MIDDLE-CLASS CAFE—NIGHT.  
After-theater diners enter; jollity everywhere. Lawson, associates and girls enter, seated. Dinner is served. Bryant enters, looks about, spies friends; is seated with Lawson and others. Bryant drinks heavily. He is seen to steady himself; sees vision (in upper right-hand corner) of Molly (his country sweetheart). Vision dissolves away. Bryant laughs with others.

Scene 7. INTERIOR OLD-FASHIONED PARLOR.  
Night; lamp burns feebly. Molly, father and mother enter, take chairs. Molly takes Bryant's photo from mantle, holds it to her; sees vision (upper left-hand corner) of Bryant at his desk, busy. Vision dissolves away. Molly kisses the photo, etc., etc.

In the use of the *vision* here illustrated but *two* scenes are listed, while if they had been done as *fades* it would have required *four* scenes. The author should be extremely careful not to confound these two technical points of photoplay construction.

The most candid advice with regard to the use of *dissolves* and *visions* the author can give is this:

Don't resort to them because you have seen a picture in which they were effectively used, for if they were not put in by the writer, they must

have been by the editor and director, and, therefore, properly utilized.

There is no part of the technique which should be used more guardedly than that of *visions* and *dissolves*; their use should be tempered with judgment, and their effectiveness only resorted to when plain action fails to convey the intent of the story as forcibly as the use of the *fade*, *vision* and *dissolve* to which the writer has recourse in photoplay construction.

### *Using the Mask.*

The word *mask*! What a mythical word it is to most amateurs! And yet it is seldom used, hardly ever by new writers; but it is an effective way of photoplay depicting at certain times, and can be used to advantage when properly applied. The *mask* is written into and used much the same as the simple *vision*; it does not require a new set or change of scene. It may be used as in a *close-up* or *bust*, or may not be, as the author, editor or director may dictate, and, generally, it is placed as a *close-up* or enlarged view of that particular scene to which it applies. *Masks* are made to show a character or a part of a scene, an attempted theft, interior of a room, a ship at sea, a race, a hand, a face, or anything that needs the intensity a *mask* will serve to give—all of which are taken through *masks* such as a keyhole, binoculars, spy-glass; in the form of a hand, showing a scene between the fingers;

it may be made to resemble a scene looking out a window, or perhaps in the form of a leaf, a ring, a profile and various other objects. From "The Deserter" can be seen the use of the *mask*, written as follows:

Scene 21. EXTERIOR, TOP OF REBEL SIGNAL TOWER  
—DAY.

Officers from scenes 11 and 12 discovered. Captain picks up field glasses, looking toward battlefield. Interest intense.

Scene 22. SMALL PART OF BATTLEFIELD SEEN  
THROUGH GLASSES.

Joe (the deserter) discovered setting fire to powder wagon.

Scene 23. BACK TO SCENE 21.

Scene 22 could have been used and shown as a straight *close-up* or *bust* of Joe, but it was much more effective *to see it through the glasses* as the captain did.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE PHOTOPLAY SCENE-PLOT.

**W**HILE it is termed by the author not an essential to the photoplay manuscript, the scene-plot makes the story all the more simple and aids the director to know what *sets* are to be used and how many scenes are to be done in each one. The scene-plot also enables the editor to follow the unity of the story. The cast of characters, synopsis and scene-plot should be placed on one page, and, in fact, by careful condensation, any one-reel story can be told and the three parts typed on one sheet.

Many amateur writers, knowing that such a thing as a scene-plot existed, have tried to write it and have made such a miserably poor job of it that it would have been better had they made no attempt at scene-plot construction at all. Scene-plot making is not a difficult matter, and yet if one exterior or interior scene be misplaced, it may lead to confusion and the editor or director will have to straighten it out. Depending upon the nature and character of the story, even though the author include the scene-plot, it may be changed somewhat by the editor in the production of the picture. This change may be necessary, although the author in writing it is unable to see it.

There are very few exterior "drops" and "sets" used in picture play production, for wherever possible *natural exteriors* are used. What the writer should do is to pay more attention to what his scene-plot shall consist, and not confuse it with a property list or scene-plot of the legitimate stage. The proper uses of *scene*, *setting* and *set* must be learned. Much confusion will be avoided in the editor's office if the writer is careful and has the scene-plot perfect—mistakeless.

### *Proper Scene-Plots.*

It is better to have no scene-plot than to have one that is not consistent, one that calls for an action in a scene where it is placed in another. In making up the scene-plot, remember that *each time the camera is moved* there is *another* scene to be numbered. For example, we have an interior of an office, which is made as a *set*. There may be five or ten or more scenes taken there. For argument sake, we shall say five. In the first (office interior) scene, we find Albert and Grace reading a letter. Then we find a scene showing the interior of a parlor. It may or may not have a direct connection *right now* with Albert and Grace, but it has taken us away from scene one, and now we are taken back to it again. But Grace has gone, only Albert remains. This *set* has been used for a *second* scene. Again, we are shown still a different

*setting*, then back again to the office. This is the *third* time this *set* has been utilized, although this time we see only a couple of clerks. Later, after other scenes, we return for the *fourth* time to see the same *set* again. Next may be an interior, after which we follow the action back to the original scene one, which now makes *five* times with the same *set*. This action, starting at scene one, would be put into a scene-plot this way:

*A Scene-Plot Example.*

Interiors

Office in 1, 3, 5, 8, 10

In "An Interrupted Honeymoon" there are thirty-seven scenes, twelve exteriors, twenty-four interiors and one *bust* or *close-up*. The scene-plot for this story is written as follows:

Interiors	Exteriors
Telegraph office 2 8	Depot 1
Coach 7 11	Depot 3 5
Police station 9 27 30 33 35 37	House 4
Parlor 13 20	House 6
Hotel office 15 18 24 29	Depot 10 12 14
Hotel room 16 19 25	Hotel 17 23 32
Bedroom 21 26 28	Street 22
Cell 31 34	
Close-up 36	

*Numbering Sets Used.*

It will be noticed that the *close-up* view numbered as thirty-six shows the same telegram as given in scene nine, but this is done to

*bring out* the importance of the message at this particular time and to identify it with the later part of the action in scene nine. To make this *bust* or *close-up* scene the camera is moved, because with the camera the same distance as in scene nine, the telegram would be shown still in the form of an *insert*.

Eight interior *sets* are used in this production, from which twenty-four scenes are taken. There are seven (natural) exteriors used, which are *not sets*, from which twelve scenes are taken, and with the *bust* scene, we have the full number—thirty-seven. It would be cheaper to *take* these scenes in natural exteriors, because such an atmosphere could be more easily obtained than it would be to use special *sets*.

Scene-plots are not difficult to make, and their careful and thorough preparation, properly applied, but serves to strengthen the writer's ability as a scenario author.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE QUESTION OF ADAPTATIONS.

**O**RIGINAL plots abound everywhere. Do not look so high or so far away for them that you will overlook those at your feet. Originality is the basis of photoplay success, and editors and producers, being on the lookout for new material, welcome the work of inexperienced writers, but in this respect the passport to the studio is not handed the writer unless his plot is conceived in originality, new ideas, action and situation, making a wholesome and interesting story. The law of supply and demand fits admirably into the photoplay business—it fits so nicely that no other guide is required. After an editor or reader sorts out the manuscripts the presentable picture plot is easily found, and if the totally different theme is there with sufficient action and “business” treatment, the writer of that story will receive his passport to the studio; otherwise the sentry—the editor—will refuse to let him pass. An editor can tell the copy of an amateur the moment he handles it. The tell-tale marks are there—impossible situations, illogical situations, a set price on the script and numerous other marks that stamp “amateur” on each sheet

of the story. But one of the things that stand out most pre-eminently before the editor is the word "adaptation."

*Adaptations in Studios.*

Adaptations are not desired from the outside, as stories from poems, novels, copyrighted books and magazine material are, as a rule, written by staff writers. Very seldom do producers purchase such material from outside photoplaywrights.

What amateur could intelligently and technically correct do Gilbert Parker's "Right of Way"? What outside writer could turn out an acceptable photoplay script of Scott's "Ivanhoe"? Where is there a new photoplaywright who could put into photoplay form that beautiful story of Myrtle Reed's "Lavender and Old Lace," Gene Stratton-Porter's "Laddie" or Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death"? There is no amateur writer who is capable of converting "Macbeth" into a photoplay scenario, nor is there any amateur author singularly fitted and able to dramatize any of the stories of Kipling, Stevenson, Tolstoi, Maxim Gorky, Guy de Maupassant, Irving, J. M. Barrie, H. Rider Haggard, Anthony Hope or Dickens. It takes a master hand to dramatize any fiction story for photoplay production, and until the amateur writer graduates into the ranks of professionalism,

adaptations should be left to the experienced photoplaywright.

*Amateurs Should Hesitate.*

Such photoplay productions as "Pippa Passess," "Little Breeches," "Lucille," "Quo Vadis," "The Blot on the 'Scutcheon," "The Cricket on the Hearth," "The Prisoner of Zenda," "The Brute," "Brewster's Millions," "Ben Hur" and "The Spoilers" were all scenarioized by master hands at photoplay writing, and the combination of writing and directing produce such a result that no amateur writer should even attempt to make an adaptation from the written copyrighted story or books, for they will fall so short of the necessary studio and technical requirements that such an adaptation would immediately meet with rejection.

In the general form of writing an adaptation there is no difference, except in the use of *leaders*, which most adaptations require. This is made necessary because there is so much poor action in many stories to be made into a scenario that it is practically worthless, from the standpoint of picture possibilities; and so *leaders* explain much which would have consumed many feet of film. "The Scarlet Letter," "The Better Man," "Two Glasses" and others had some of their strongest points shown by leaders, and yet the weaker action was so covered, too, that

the whole story became one of a continuous interest, because the adaptations had been handled by capable authors and writers. An adaptation requires the same effort, scenes, characters and all that a scenario for an original idea requires. But the one who puts a copyrighted book or story into scenario form must also do more.

### *Scenarioizing Book Stories.*

It would be useless to scenarioize and film *all* of a copyrighted story, a poem or a book, and that is where the one capable of making an adaptation has the better of the inexperienced photoplaywright. And yet most of the submitted adaptations come from outside writers—writers who have not been successful in writing their *own* ideas into a salable scenario. Such authors cannot but fail, because they *cannot see* the other story as the author of it did; the photoplaywright, to succeed, must *see* his story, his *own idea*, before he can expect to transfer the story thought-germ of another to the studio picture play.

All books and short stories do not lend themselves to photoplay adaptation—far from it. The same applies to poetry. There might be a suggestion or an idea gleaned from some, but as straight adaptations they would be worthless to the film producer.

Wait until you have sold at least ten of your own original ideas, plotted and put into

scenario form, before you attempt to picturize for photoplay production the work of some other writer, who has happened to turn out a poem, a book or a story which so interests you that you feel you must scenarioize it.

### *Methods of Adapting.*

The application of picture play technique to the novel or other copyrighted work is the same as applying it to an original story or scenario. For the benefit of the amateur writer, it may be stated that there are two ways of scenarioizing or making a film adaptation as it applies to staff or studio writer and to the outside author.

In the adaptation of books for film production the complete stories are generally used, as in the case of "The Spoilers" and "The Spitfire," while in the adaptation of some of Dickens' works it may be done only in part, as in "Mr. Jingle's Plot," which is taken from "Pickwick Papers."

In conjunction with the studio director, the staff writer and players get the "gist of the plot" from the book-story itself, and all that is necessary to be written out are the scenes of action, and from such a version the studio is able to "put on" the correct adaptation of a copyrighted work.

The following is an adaptation of "The Spitfire:"

*The Four-Part Adaptation.*

"THE SPITFIRE."

By Edward H. Peple.

Scenario by B. P. Schulberg.

(Produced by The Famous Players' Film Co.)

## CAST.

*Bruce Morson.*  
*Valda Girard.*  
*Marcus Girard.*  
*James Ormond.*

*Tracey.*  
*Beasley.*  
*Aunt Mary.*  
*Polly.*

## SYNOPSIS.

Bruce Morson, a young American, returning from travels in Egypt is robbed of some valuable jewels in a London hotel, and chases the thieves to the yacht, "Spitfire," at Calais, which the crooks have boarded and taken command of under forged orders from its owner, Marcus Girard, who is in London. The yacht is just about to sail out of port, but by a ruse, Morson manages to get aboard, and promptly falls in love with Valda, Girard's pretty daughter, who is also a "spitfire." The crooks tell Valda her father is a smuggler, show her the jewels they have stolen, and convince her they are guarding them for her father, and that Morson is a customs officer, spying upon her in order to trap Girard. Valda indignantly turns upon the helpless Morson, orders him into seaman's costume, and compels him to work his passage to New York. On the homeward voyage, Morson undergoes many ordeals, both humorous and dramatic, and is even finally accused of the theft of his own property, before the final denouement, which shows the burning of the yacht and the heroic rescue of Valda by Morson, who is at last able to right himself, baffle the thieves, and win the woman he loves.

*The Story.*

## LEADER.

BRUCE MORSON, AN AMERICAN ENGINEER,  
 TRAVELS THROUGH EGYPT.

## Scene 1. EXTERIOR—DESERT ATMOSPHERE.

Sandy road. Morson and two Egyptian servants riding along on horseback. Morson dressed for desert travel, helmet, khaki suit, etc., studying guidebook, surveys scenery, etc.

## Scene 2. EXTERIOR—DESERT.

Tent in background. Little Oriental child in foreground, evidently wandered from tent. Small band of marauders (5) rush into scene,

- snatch child off. Sudden commotion at door of tent. Men and women run from tent, and from behind tent, old Shiek snatches rifle, mounts horse, rides off hastily, few servants following.
- Scene 3. **EXTERIOR—STRETCH OF SANDY ROAD (SIMILAR TO SCENE 1).**  
Morson registers he has seen theft of child. Tells servants, urges horse forward, looks again, snatches rifle, aims carefully—shoots (quick action in all this)—cut.
- Scene 4. **EXTERIOR—DESERT.**  
Distant view of man with child (dummy) on horseback in lead—man rolls from horse.
- Scene 5. **EXTERIOR.**  
Morson and followers riding swiftly to rescue.
- Scene 6. **EXTERIOR—DESERT.**  
Shiek and followers ride into scene, beating down marauders. Child rises unhurt. Shiek leaps from horse to child. Morson and servants join Shiek in finally routing brigands. Shiek with son in arms, thanks Morson gratefully. Cut.
- LEADER. NEXT DAY THE SHIEK SENDS MORSON INVALUABLE JEWELS AS A REWARD.**
- Scene 7. **EXTERIOR—DESERT.**  
Hastily-erected travelers' tent. Morson sitting in front of it. He is making notes, eating food servants hand him. Messenger brings him packet from Shiek, which proves to be valuable jewels.
- Scene 8. **CLOSE UP OF OPENING OF PACKET AND JEWELS.**
- Scene 9. **INTERIOR—GIRARD'S WALL STREET OFFICE IN N. Y.**  
Typical broker's office, handsomely furnished. Girard, prosperous, gray-haired, big gruff man, busy at desk. Clerks come and go. Activity in office. Enter Valda, his daughter, pushing past clerks, who timorously indicate her father has said no one must enter. She approaches desk, he turns with a scowl, until he sees it is his daughter, smiles grimly in spite of himself, then motions her off—too busy for her. She stamps foot—wants him to come with her—he can't, it is out of the question—she picks up hat from rack, she indicates clock, puts hat on his head, tries to drag him off, he resists.

**CUT-IN.** "Your mother was the only woman who could boss me!"

Back to scene. Valda registers little tempest of rage at being crossed—pounds his desk with her fist—he does the same, both angry, she "chip off the old block"—at last she turns and flounces, almost in tears—he still angry, then chuckles slowly after door closes, shakes head, rises, puts on coat and hat, follows her rapidly—he turns at door and gives awful look to grinning clerks, which stiffens them into soberness.

**LEADER.**

THAT EVENING.

**Scene 10.** INTERIOR—TYPICAL NEW YORK CLUB ROOM.

Girard sitting, smoking, reading—waiter deferentially lights his cigar—two men walk in, one of them Ormond, conspicuous for elegance and suavity. Ormond is introduced to Girard by the other—the three sit and talk—Girard orders drinks. Girard seems impressed and interested by Ormond during conversation. Girard and Ormond exchange cards—Girard examines Ormond's card. Flash card.

**INSERT.**

(Card): JAMES ORMOND

Pres. International Touring Company,

Offices: London, Paris and Berlin.

Back to scene. Girard registers interest. Ormond shows by sinister flickering of eyelids his triumph in getting personal attention of the rich man. After a little talk, they rise and go out together.

**Scene 11.** INTERIOR—ORMOND'S HOTEL ROOM.

Ormond, Beasley, Trainor and Tracey on—by contrast, Ormond and Beasley are gentlemanly in every attitude, while Trainor and Tracey are "rough-necks"—they are seated, grouped closely together about little center table, talking very earnestly—register caution when one raises voice too loud, evidently conspiring—sinister—evidently band of crooks—Ormond takes Girard's card, passes it to the others—speaks:

**CUT-IN.** "A wealthy capitalist—worth following!"

Back to scene. Others interested.—talk animatedly—Tracey over-serious, takes himself and his business and the world very seriously,



chews cigar solemnly, is rough and positive in movements, pounds fist on table once, others silence him—Ormond directs conversation to Beasley, they agree to something—Beasley agrees, nods head in reply to Ormond's instructions. Cut.

**Scene 12. EXTERIOR—ON PIER.**

Girard and Valda, accompanied by Ormond, come into scene. Girard points to trim yacht in the distance, pointing out its various points. Ormond again impresses the old man with his knowledge of yachts and admiration of this particular one—into launch and off.

**Scene 13. CLOSE UP OF LAUNCH.**

Valda, Girard and Ormond talking. Girard with mischievous sly look at his daughter, says:

**CUT-IN.** "I have named the yacht after my daughter!"

**Scene 14. FULL VIEW OF LAUNCH AND YACHT—**  
With name of "SPITFIRE" plainly printed on bow of yacht.

Valda registers petulant indignation. Girard turns to Ormond with "I told you so" expression—laughs.

**Scene 15. DECK OF YACHT NEAR LANDING STAIRWAY.**

Girard, Valda and Ormond coming over stairway to deck. Capt. Larris greets party, speaks to Girard, in reply to Girard's question as to how things are going, tells Girard they need new first mate. Register Ormond's opportunity, as Girard seems perplexed, speaks:

**CUT-IN.** "If you need a first mate, I know just the man."

Girard shakes Ormond's hand. Glad. Speaks to Larris. Larris nods briefly. Register that Larris does not appreciate butting-in of Ormond. They stroll out of scene.

**Scene 16. EXTERIOR—A TENT.**

Desert exterior. Morson issued from tent, he and servants finishing loading pack-horse, and he bids good-bye to servants, gives them coins which they receive gratefully. He mounts horse, servant leads the other horse by bridle, other servants all salaam—he and servant wave farewell salute, he with his hat,

servant with hand—he is leaving the desert, his face set toward “home.”

**Scene 17. INTERIOR—OFFICE OF GIRARD.** Girard and Ormond chatting, office empty, clock points to 5:30. Enter Valda, very much upset—has little weekly paper in her hand—nods curtly to Ormond as she remembers to greet him. Turns to her father angrily. Begins to speak, glancing rather nervously at Ormond, who takes cue and strolls to window standing with hands behind back—pretends not to hear, although listening. Valda shows father clipping. Flash clipping.

**INSERT.**

“TOWN ITEMS.”

It has just transpired that a certain New York capitalist and yachtsman on his return from Europe found himself in serious trouble with the customs officers, who had discovered in his luggage some valuable jewels, which he said he had “forgotten” to declare, and which probably were intended to deck his beautiful daughter, a popular debutante of the season.

Girard reads, laughs, shrugs shoulders. Valda takes it more seriously. She stamps foot, tears necklace from neck, throws it on desk before him. Girard gets furious, throws papers on floor, pounds desk. Valda up to door, angry, in tears. Girard follows her. Scene at door, during which Ormond slyly picks up paper, reads, tears out article, slips it in pocket, throws paper back under desk. Girard back to desk after Valda leaves, tries to appear unconcerned. Cut.

**Scene 18. INTERIOR—ORMOND’S ROOM IN HOTEL.** Beasley and Ormond on, talking. Both in evening dress. Ormond draws out clipping he tore from paper, talks about it. Beasley interested—nods—Ormond speaks:

**CUT-IN.** “You are to be first mate on the ‘Spitfire.’ we may need that yacht in our business.” Ormond shows Beasley theater tickets (don’t flash). Beasley smiles broadly. Both talk, Beasley agreeing with Ormond. Ormond and Beasley go out of room.

**Scene 19. INTERIOR—RECEPTION PARLOR—SMALL BUT BEAUTIFULLY FURNISHED.**

Girard, in smoking jacket and slippers, comes in with Ormond, evidently just from outdoors. Father sends maid for Valda, and calls servant, who takes Ormond's stick, hat and gloves. Father is genial in manner toward Ormond, who talks pleasantly. Enter Valda, who greets Ormond politely, but not effusively. He draws theater tickets from pocket and invites her to theater. She pleads headache. Father looks at her sternly. She flashes back at him behind Ormond's back. Ormond taken aback and baffled, but smoothly conceals feelings. Returns tickets to pocket, sits, talks entertainingly to Valda, who is bored, but too polite to show it. Ormond politely draws Girard into conversation. Valda takes chance to plead headache and withdraw, to the chagrin of both Ormond and her father, though she does it pleasantly. Cut.

**Scene 20. DECK OF THE YACHT.**

Preparing to leave—crew active. Beasley now first mate in uniform of "Spitfire," much in evidence. Register Larris' dislike for the officious Beasley.

**Scene 21. INTERIOR—VALDA'S ROOM.**

Valda, father and maid packing steamer trunks with traveling clothes, frocks, etc. Girard fussily superintending with outburst from Valda now and then. Valet assisting and being regularly scolded. Enter her Aunt Mary and Cousin Polly, who are greeted with enthusiasm by Valda. Father and Aunt Mary register mutual lack of sympathy. Girard, scowling, leaves. Polly wild with excitement and curiosity about Valda's prospective trip to Europe. She exclaims in envy and Valda, suddenly getting mischievous idea, turns to her, asking if they want to go, too. Polly, after a moment of silent surprise, turns to Aunt Mary, begs her. Aunt Mary finally consents. Polly dances about in joy, hugs aunt and Valda. Valda laughs to herself as aunt and Polly leave in excitement.

**Scene 22. INTERIOR—CLUBROOM (AS IN SCENE 10).**  
Ormond and friend who previously introduced him, there with others. Girard comes in, tells

of his coming trip, bids all good-bye, asks Ormond if he would like to go. Ormond hesitates, narrows eyes, as though he thinks better of it (as though plotting) then refuses politely. All then crowd around Girard, Ormond leading in good-bye toasts.

Scene 23. DECK OF YACHT.

Everything in readiness. Capt. Larris makes last tour of inspection. Girard comes aboard with luggage carried by valet—very fussy and very cross—stewards assist him.

Scene 24. ORMOND'S ROOM AT HOTEL.

Trainor, Tracey and Ormond at door of room. Ormond giving men final instructions. Gives each his steamer ticket folded, which they unfold and examine—nod—he directs them to meet him later, pointing off—they nod—all out.

Scene 25. DECK OF YACHT.

Girard waiting for Valda. "Late as usual." He says same to Capt. Larris, who agrees with him. "Women are all alike." Girard paces deck impatiently, looks at watch, stamps and swears. Suddenly he turns and sees Valda coming up landing stairway followed by Ormond. Girard registers relief. She runs to him and when he reprimands her for her tardiness, smiles sweetly at him and stepping aside, says:

CUT-IN. "I forgot to tell you, I've invited Aunt Mary and Cousin Polly to go to Europe with us!". She steps aside and discloses Aunt Mary puffing up the stairway followed by the gleeful and excited Polly. Girard takes one look. An expression of horror comes over his face and he nearly collapses. Capt. Larris supports him and sees the humor of it, aside. Aunt Mary looks sternly at the hapless Girard. During this business Ormond walks out. Cut.

Scene 26. ANOTHER SECTION OF BOW AROUND BOAT.

Out of sight of others, Beasley on, giving instructions to sailors. Ormond comes on, talks to Beasley hurriedly and earnestly. Beasley registers he understands. Ormond returns to.

Scene 27. SAME AS SCENE 25 (DECK OF YACHT).

Bids all good-bye and hastily off.

- Scene 28. BOW OF DECK.  
Final casting off, and raising of anchor.
- Scene 29. INTERIOR—CORNER OF SMOKING ROOM  
ON YACHT.  
Near buffet. Girard with look of despair,  
takes huge drink of whisky, downs it at one  
gulp.
- Scene 30. EXTERIOR—PIER.  
Ormond waiting, looking toward yacht—sees  
it steam off, looks a moment, hastily turns,  
runs off.
- Scene 31. EXTERIOR—STREET NEAR PIER.  
Ormond hails taxi—jumps in after giving di-  
rection to chauffeur. Off.
- Scene 32. EXTERIOR—GANG PLANK OF OCEAN  
LINER.  
Ormond runs hastily up, the grinning faces of  
Trainor and Tracey peering at him over the  
rail.

LEADER. MORSON ARRIVES IN LONDON.

- Scene 33. EXTERIOR—LONDON HOTEL.  
Bruce Morson arrives at entrance with lug-  
gage looks around with pleased expression.  
Glad to be back in civilization. Uniformed at-  
tendant comes forward for luggage. He goes  
in.
- Scene 34. EXTERIOR—STRETCH OF OCEAN.  
The yacht and ocean liner, liner in lead, both  
moving in same direction.  
*End of reel one.*

"THE SPITFIRE."

*Reel Two.*

- Scene 35. EXTERIOR, CAFE.  
Ormond and Tracey at side table, and few  
others in groups at tables. Morson and friend  
come in, sit at table, order drinks. Morson  
peels bill from large roll, pays for drinks.  
Ormond gets glimpse of bills. Tracey, seeing,  
tugs at Ormond's sleeve, with bulging eyes.  
Ormond, always the controlled master crook,  
calms him sternly, but moves his chair back  
a little to hear Morson talk. Ormond's back  
is toward Morson, in response to friend's ques-  
tions Morson tells of his experience with the  
Sheik in Egypt. As he talks fade out into

- Scene 36. SAME AS SCENE 3.  
Quick flash.
- Scene 37. SAME AS SCENE 4.  
Quick flash.
- Scene 38. SAME AS SCENE 6.  
Quick flash.
- Scene 39. SAME AS SCENES 7 AND 8.  
Fade out into
- Scene 40. SAME AS SCENE 36.  
At finish of the narrative, Morson half pulls out jewel case from pocket with:
- CUT-IN. "And so he gave me these jewels."  
Morson, with half look around, suddenly remembers he is in a public place and puts back jewels. Ormond indicates intense interest, but has to quiet Tracey, who is now nearly crazy with covetous greed. Morson and friend rise and go out. Ormond and Tracey rise, Tracey rising so quickly that he knocks over chair, nearly ready to run after Morson. Ormond pulls Tracey back sternly. They go out, affecting casual indifference.
- Scene 41. SAME AS SCENE 33, EXTERIOR, MORSON'S HOTEL.  
Morson arrives and goes in. Ormond and Tracey follow cautiously, as though they have been shadowing at a distance.
- LEADER. "714, PLEASE."
- Scene 42. INTERIOR, HOTEL LOBBY.  
Morson comes into scene, goes to desk and gets key. Tracey walks casually past desk in time to catch number, turns and walks out, as Morson walks toward elevator. Cut.
- Scene 43. EXTERIOR, HOTEL (SAME AS SCENE 41).  
Tracey out, rejoins Ormond, tells number; both off; Tracey excited.
- Scene 44. EXTERIOR, HARBOR.  
Spitfire steaming into harbor, city in distance.
- Scene 45. EXTERIOR, UPPER DECK OF SPITFIRE.  
Valda, Aunt Mary and Polly looking over rail toward city. Valda explaining to the excited party, marine glasses in use, etc.
- Scene 46. INTERIOR, SMOKING ROOM.  
Beasley cautiously writing, occasionally looking over shoulder. Flash telegram:

- INSERT.** James Ormond,  
Hotel Cecil,  
London.  
Arrived at Calais, dropped Girard and valet at Liverpool; old man will be tied up with business deal in London for ten days and is stopping at Hotel Ritz. Await further instructions from you.  
BEASLEY.  
Finishes writing, folds paper, puts in pocket. Cut.
- Scene 47.** INTERIOR, ENGLISH HOTEL ROOM (HANDSOMELY FURNISHED).  
Girard fuming, as usual, valet unpacking and panic-stricken. Cut.
- Scene 48.** EXTERIOR, PIER—SUPPOSEDLY AT CALAIS.  
Launch lands, Aunt Mary, Polly and Valda exit from launch and scene, with individual business. Aunt Mary nervous.
- Scene 49.** INTERIOR, ORMOND'S ROOM IN LONDON HOTEL—RATHER WELL-FITTED ROOM.  
Discovered Ormond, smoking and planning, narrowed eyes, uniformed boy brings telegram on tray. Ormond takes message, tips boy, reads, nods, dismisses boy, then studies telegram. Flash (London receiving blank).
- INSERT.** WIRE WRITTEN BY BEASLEY IN SCENE 46.  
Ormond registers approval, knock on door. Trainor and Tracey arrive. Ormond instinctively conceals wire until he sees who they are. Three talk and plan. Trainor is crook of lowest type. Tracey "rough-neck" sport, still chewing cigar. Tracey and Trainor lounge about in characteristic attitudes. When Ormond shows wire they become keen and alert and businesslike. All heads together. Ormond outlines action:
- CUT-IN.** "When the job is done, make for Calais and meet me on the 'Spitfire.'"  
Tracey and Trainor excited and eager. All leave.
- Scene 50.** EXTERIOR, STREET—TINT NIGHT.  
Ormond, Tracey and Trainor come on. Ormond gives last direction and leaves, Ormond going in opposite direction from others.

- Scene 51. INTERIOR, GIRARD'S ROOM HOTEL—LIGHTS—NIGHT (SAME AS SCENE 47).**  
Girard, changing shoes, excited. Valet becomes nervous. As valet hands Girard shoe he drops it on his stockinged foot. Girard in rage and pain, picks up shoe and hurls it at valet, evidently striking him in the face; valet puts hand to face. Girard commands him to bring the shoe. Valet brings shoe with one hand, guarding his face with the other. Girard snatches shoe, puts it on, slaps on hat and goes out of room with a final impression. Valet shakes fist toward closed door, really dares to be a man in Girard's absence.
- Scene 52. EXTERIOR, HOTEL (IMPOSING)—ENTRANCE AS ENGLISH AS POSSIBLE.**  
Girard comes out. Ormond, who has been cautiously watching in background, hat pulled over eyes, now comes forward and goes into hotel.
- Scene 53. INTERIOR, LOBBY IN MORSON'S HOTEL (SAME AS SCENE 42).**  
Tracey and Trainor in—up to desk—speaks to clerk:
- CUT-IN.** "We are friends of Mr. Morson's and would like the room next to his."  
Clerk looks at his list of vacant rooms, nods, calls front, gives key, they register, and off.
- Scene 54. INTERIOR, CORRIDOR IN HOTEL—TWO DOORS SHOWING IN ROW—714 AND 716.**  
Bellboy, Trainor and Tracey come to room 716—bellboy inserts key in lock. Cut.
- Scene 55. INTERIOR, HOTEL ROOM OF GIRARD (SAME AS SCENE 51).**  
Ormond enters and is greeted with pleased surprise by valet. Ormond asks valet about black eye. Valet explains, tells his troubles. Ormond sympathizing. Ormond gives valet cigar, sits, motions valet to sit; valet shows he is pleased and flattered by Ormond's condescension. Sits awkwardly. Ormond begins to talk earnestly. Cut.
- Scene 56. INTERIOR, MORSON'S ROOM IN HOTEL.**  
Morson prepares to retire, opens window wider, takes jewels out of belt case, puts them under pillow (they are in soft chamois bag). Morson starts undressing, takes off collar. Cut.



- Scene 57. INTERIOR, GIRARD'S ROOM IN HOTEL.**  
Continuation of conversation between Ormond and valet. Valet now on Ormond's side, listening eagerly. Ormond gives valet bills, which valet takes gloatingly. Ormond rises:
- CUT-IN.** "Remember, if any telegrams arrive from Calais for Mr. Girard, you are to read and answer them as I have instructed."  
Valet nods with many assurances that he will do as told. Ormond smiles, pats him on back. A monogramed cigar case of Girard's is on dresser—as he turns, Ormond see it—thinks—he decides to ask for it—valet at first hesitates, then gives it to him—he goes out, smiling in sinister fashion—valet gloats over money.
- Scene 58. INTERIOR—MORSON'S ROOM (AS IN SCENE 56).** ff  
Morson, in pajamas, puts hand up to turn out light. Cut to
- Scene 59. INTERIOR—CORRIDOR OUTSIDE ROOMS 714 AND 716 (AS IN SCENE 54),**  
No light in 716, door slightly ajar, hall dimly lighted. Tracey's face in door of 716, peering cautiously out toward 714. The light that shows over transom of 714 suddenly goes out. Look of satisfaction on Tracey's face as he disappears into darkened room 716 again.
- Scene 60. EXTERIOR—R. R. STATION—NIGHT.**  
Ormond pacing platform impatiently waiting for Dover train (suggestion, sign in vicinity of platform, "Train for Dover—time, etc.").
- Scene 61. EXTERIOR—SHOWING WINDOW—MOON-LIGHT—SHOWING WINDOW LEDGES ADJOINING, SO THAT ONE WINDOW CAN BE REACHED FROM THE OTHER—DEEP LEDGES, ETC.**  
The figure of Trainor, with dark lantern, mask, revolver, etc., from his window L. to R. window, makes journey with difficulty, registering peril, caution and fear; he reaches the other window, begins to enter, Tracey follows, starting from L. window in same manner. Cut.
- Scene 62. INTERIOR—MORSON'S ROOM (AS IN SCENE 56) ROOM ALMOST IN TOTAL DARKNESS—ONLY WEAK SHAFT OF**

**LIGHT IN TRANSOM, COMING FROM LIGHT IN CORRIDOR.**

Trainor comes through window with lantern, flashes light about room, throws it on Morson's sleeping face, quickly off again, his shadowy form approaches bed, seen in light which he has placed on table. He takes bottle from pocket, saturates handkerchief, puts over Morson's face—at this point Tracey comes through window—light now increased by two lanterns. Morson stirs. Tracey quickly searching for jewels, feels under pillow, flashing light on it, pulls out jewel bag—registers triumph—Morson rouses in spite of chloroform, jumps up—while he is struggling with Trainor, Tracey runs with jewels to window and clammers out. Trainor hits Morson over head with revolver. Morson staggers back against the bed an instant, but recovers, dashes blood from eyes and rushes after Trainor as he reaches window, pulling him back into room by leg—desperate struggle with intermittent darkness and gleams from the lantern. Cut.

**Scene 63. EXTERIOR—NIGHT—IN FRONT OF MORSON'S HOTEL.**

Tracey out, fearfully and quickly hurries out of scene.

**Scene 64. INTERIOR—MORSON'S ROOM.**

Morson tying Trainor in chair. Morson turns up light and reveals Trainor trussed in chair and looking as though he had had far the worst of the combat. Morson eyes Trainor contemptuously and then wipes away blood from his own forehead, goes to bed, searches for jewels, goes to Trainor, searches him, asks where they are. Trainor doggedly refuses to tell. Morson sees the other lantern, points to it, and to window, asks him where his partner is—again Trainor sullenly shakes his head won't talk. Trainor registers he is uncomfortable, wants to be unbound. Morson refuses. Trainor must stay as he is till he decides to tell. Trainor writhes in discomfort, but Morson sits calmly on bed, lights cigarette nonchalantly and waits.

LEADER.

DAWN.

Scene 65. EXTERIOR—PIER AT CALAIS (SAME AS SCENE 48)—"SPITFIRE" LITTLE OFF IN HARBOR.

Ormond arrives at pier, registers recognition of the yacht, and success—gets into launch at pier, tells man in charge to make for yacht in distance.

LEADER.

TRAINOR TALKS.

Scene 66. INTERIOR—MORSON'S ROOM.

Continuation of scene 64. Morson now clad in shirt and trousers, sits on edge of bed, still smoking calmly. Trainor, head drooped, exhausted from the all-night confinement in his bonds to chair, all in. Morson asks him if he's ready to talk. Trainor hesitates, then nods emphatically—he is! He talks rapidly. Morson now interested and alert, leans forward, listens, rings bell, into hat and coat, opens door, bellboy in doorway. Morson quickly speaks to him, pointing to trussed figure of Trainor in chair. Bellboy is left standing in open-mouthed astonishment as Morson rushes past him and out.

*End of reel two.*

### "THE SPITFIRE."

#### *Reel Three.*

Scene 67. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT—DAWN TINT.

Beasley and Larris on deck—register attempt at conversation by Beasley—discouraged by Larris, who is gruff. Larris walks away, reads telegram with worried expression. Flash (telegram from Girard to Larris):

INSERT

Capt. Larris,  
Aboard Spitfire,  
Off Calais.

Mr. James Ormond to take full charge—reach New York by twentieth. Fly private signals and cruise off Sandy Hook till further orders. Drive her as hard as hell will let you.

MARCUS GIRARD.

Beasley looks over rail, sees Ormond approaching in launch, speaks to Larris after indicating interest and delight. Indicates to Larris

- that Ormond is intending to board yacht. Larris surprised.
- Scene 68. EXTERIOR—LAUNCH ON WATER APPROACHING YACHT.  
Ormond signals Beasley. Launch reaches yacht, Ormond climbs up stairway.
- Scene 69. INTERIOR—VALDA'S CABIN.  
Valda sleepy, in kimona, sitting at dressing-table combing hair. Polly runs in in negligee, wide awake, chattering. Valda answers her. Polly admires Valda's hair, takes comb, starts to comb. Valda smiles, suddenly Polly comes to a snarl, pulls hair accidentally. Valda jumps up in rage, takes comb away, makes face of pain. Polly overcome by Valda's scolding and remorse at hurting her cries babishly. Valda immediately becomes good natured and comforts Polly.
- Scene 70. DECK OF YACHT.  
Ormond on board, greeted by Beasley and Larris. Larris polite, but not deferential, rather puzzled by Ormond's presence. Ormond produces telegram. Larris reads. Flash telegram:
- INSERT. James Ormond,  
Hotel DuBois,  
Calais, France.  
"Spitfire" in port, just off mole—clears this afternoon. Tracey will meet you in time. Go on board and take full charge of sailing directions and anchorage.
- MARCUS GIRARD.  
Larris looks angry and puzzled. Returns telegram to Ormond, looks as though he places little credence in its authenticity. Larris paces deck, hands in pockets or behind back, lost in thought, undecided, wondering. Ormond waits, anxious, but affecting calm, and retaining self-possession. Larris gets idea. Sends steward down to call Valda. Cut.
- Scene 71. INTERIOR—VALDA'S ROOM.  
She and Polly chatting, as in scene 69—steward knocks, is told to come in—stands in doorway and gives message to Valda—captain wants her on deck. Valda rises, wondering. Polly very much excited. Valda calms her with little shake. Valda hastily gets into long steamer coat, throws cape to Polly. Girls out.

**Scene 72. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT.**

Larris and Ormond still discussing wire. Ormond calm and imperturbable. Larris angry and disturbed, arguing. Beasley watching with a smile. Valda comes on quickly, followed by Polly. Stops short when she sees and recognizes Ormond. Girls embarrassed, quickly pull long coats around them to hide negligee. Aunt Mary enters and witnesses scene. Larris explains situation to Valda. She looks puzzled and Ormond politely hands her the telegram. She glances at it, looks puzzled again. Ormond steps forward—speaks:

**CUT-IN.**

"I am acting as your father's agent on a private business matter."

Valda accepts the explanation as sufficient—pouts a little—turns to captain, questions him. Reluctantly the captain pulls out his own wire, shown in previous scene (67). Aunt Mary shocked at father's profane wire. Valda laughs, recognizes father's profanity. She is then completely convinced. Valda introduces aunt and Polly. They are rather stiff. Valda and the captain are at one side talking, Valda telling Larris she knows Ormond socially, vouching for him. Polly watches them open-eyed, the scene is altogether too exciting and puzzling for her. Beasley and Ormond are off to one side, exchange quick word or two and meaning glances. Captain nods to Valda, walks away, slowly and thoughtfully. Valda and Polly excuse themselves, go down to dress.

**Scene 73. FLASH OF BRIDGE.**

The captain stands at bridge undecided, makes up his mind, stands a moment undecided then makes resolve. Walks away quickly.

**Scene 74. INTERIOR—WIRELESS ROOM IN THE YACHT.**

Operator at table, apparatus, etc. Larris comes in, gives instructions, operator nods, busies himself in sending messages.

**Scene 75. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT.**

Tracey climbs on yacht by landing stairway. Ormond greets him. Introduces him to captain. Tracey's jovial, over-friendly manner disgusts the dignified Captain Larris, who repels his advances coldly, looks meaningly at the two and turns his back—walks off.

**Scene 76. INTERIOR—GIRARD'S ROOM IN HOTEL SAVOY.**

Boy brings in captain's wire to Girard, valet signs, pays, smiles, indicates this is one he is to handle. When boy goes he opens and reads. Flash wire.

**INSERT.****TRANSCRIPT OF WIRELESS.**

Marcus Girard,  
Hotel Ritz,  
London.

Are James Ormond's orders from you to take full charge of "Spitfire" and sail at once to New York authentic?

**LARRIS.**

Valet reads, grins, then starts to write with glee, followed by fear and trembling, as he thinks what might happen if caught. Cut.

**Scene 77. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT.**

Larris, Beasley, Ormond, Tracey, Valda, Polly and aunt, in two or three groups about deck. Ormond and Tracey stroll away from scene into

**Scene 78. INTERIOR—SMOKING ROOM.**

Ormond glances round, makes sure of privacy, quickly questions Tracey—Tracey nods with importance, hand goes to pocket, draws out chamois bag of Morson's jewels—at this moment door opens—both men start—it is Beasley, who smiles at their nervousness—Tracey, when door is closed, again takes jewels from pocket—Beasley's eyes light up, involuntarily puts out hand. Ormond calmly waves him off, takes the jewels from Tracey himself, who is reluctant to part with them. Ormond asks for Trainor, Tracey makes gesture, "all in," describes fight and capture. Ormond thoughtful, registers worry—Ormond draws out Girard's cigarette case from pocket, puts jewels in it—men admire case.

**Scene 79. CLOSE UP OF CASE, FINGER POINTING MONOGRAM.****Scene 80. WIRELESS ROOM, AS IN SCENE 74.**

Captain Larris standing by operator—then paces floor, waiting answer to his message—light flickers, operator gets message, writes it out, smiles as he gets it—hands it to Larris, who reads. Flash message:

INSERT.

Capt. Larris,

Spitfire,

Off Calais.

Mind your own business, or you'll have  
no business to mind!

MARCUS GIRARD.

Larris finishes reading—crumples wire—exclamation of profane disgust, but convinced of its authenticity—operator chuckles. Larris off.

Scene 81. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT.

Captain Larris appears and tells Valda of wire from father—pulls out message and shows it to Valda, who laughs heartily. Aunt Mary registers cold disapproval of it all. Larris very much annoyed, as Ormond registers calm triumph—others walk away, leaving Larris scratching chin thoughtfully.

CUT-IN.

"I wish I could wake up and find I was drunk." Shoves hands in pockets, hunches shoulders, strides moodily down deck.

Scene 82. EXTERIOR—ANOTHER PORTION OF DECK.

Larris and Beasley on, giving hurried directions to sailors to cast off. Great activity.

Scene 83. EXTERIOR—PIER AT CALAIS.

Morson quickly on, breathlessly, sees yacht in distance—questions man in uniform, man nods—Morson registers delight—it is the "Spitfire," the yacht of which Trainor has told him—he wipes his forehead, pushes hat back—shows relief.

Scene 84. EXTERIOR—CLOSE UP QUICK FLASH OF PULLING UP "SPITFIRE'S" ANCHOR.

Ormond, Beasley and Tracey register nervous relief and gladness.

Scene 85. EXTERIOR—PIER AT CALAIS (SAME AS SCENE 84).

Morson, with dismay, sees "Spitfire" steam slowly off—a moment of indecision and he rushes to the piermaster and points to yacht, imperative that he catch it—men hastily hoist signal flags on pole at end of pier.

Scene 86. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT, SHOWING PORTION OF BRIDGE.

Captain Larris on bridge, with glasses, registers he sees signals, runs down ladder—tells Ormond, points to flags on pole—Ormond

shakes head—pay no attention—Larris registers they must stop. Tracey shows comic despair. Ormond indicates his instructions from Girard, must go. Larris glares at him angrily.

**Scene 87. EXTERIOR—PIER.**

Morson desperate, yacht further off in the harbor. Morson suddenly conceives idea, makes negotiations with tugmaster. Points to yacht. Talks to tugmaster, rehearses plan, tugmaster laughs, is tempted by roll of bills Morson shows, nods, agrees—hastily orders tug out. Morson aboard. Off.

**Scene 88. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT.**

All on—girls excited and gleeful. Aunt Mary struggling with voluminous veils, blown by the wind. Ormond doing the gallant—talking to girls. Valda suddenly sees the tug, points, Polly stares excitedly. Tug can be seen not far off, men can be seen struggling on the deck of tug-boat near rail—all run to rail of yacht, look toward tug, registering excited interest.

**Scene 89. CLOSE UP OF TUG.**

Tug-boat crew lift the struggling Morson, and throw him overboard.

**Scene 90. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT.**

All see Morson thrown overboard. Larris orders ship to stop and boat to be lowered. Ormond steps forward and stops him—tells Larris to go straight ahead—gasp of horror from all. Larris remonstrates, the man is drowning. Ormond reminds him forcibly that he is commanding the yacht. Morson can be seen struggling in water, evidently drowning—Valda looks at Ormond in horrified displeasure, surprised at lack of humanity. She takes command herself, turns to Captain Larris and tells him to stop the boat. Larris obeys her command with alacrity. Ormond, Tracey and Beasley register chagrin. Captain gives directions to pilot, boat is lowered—swings off to rescue Morson. Beasley and four sailors get into the boat. Valda leaves Ormond with a frown and goes to bridge, looking on through glass. Aunt Mary covers her eyes in fear. Excitement from Polly.

**Scene 91. CLOSE UP OF MORSON IN WATER.**

Life-boat reaches him, men haul him in.



- Scene 92. EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT.**  
All press against rail except Ormond and Tracey, who register disgust.
- Scene 93. CLOSE UP OF DECK.**  
Lifeboat being hoisted up to rail—crew and Beasley clamber over rail, bringing with them the wet and shivering Morson—Valda comes forward with exclamation of pity. Morson throws hair back out of eyes, looks admiringly at Valda, then bows gratefully and gallantly over her hand. Both register instant admiration and the romance to come. Polly clasps hands romantically, and gazes at Morson adoringly. Tracey, horror-stricken when he recognizes Morson, excitedly pulls at Ormond's coat, and tells him Morson is the man they robbed:
- CUT-IN.** "Trainor has squealed!"  
Tracey quickly and excitedly telling Ormond, who silences Tracey, and is tense in thought, planning quickly. Valda points to Morson's clothing, speaks to Beasley, who is watching Tracey and Ormond in troubled anxiety. Beasley rouses with start, takes Morson with him. Morson turns and bows deeply to Valda, who stands looking after him admiringly. Polly comes up and tries to get a look at retiring Morson, dodging from one side of Valda to the other. Valda turns and catches her. Gives her blank look. Cut.
- Scene 94. INTERIOR—GIRARD'S ROOM AT HOTEL.**  
Valet, repentant, horrified, abject figure of woe, hastily packing to make his getaway before Girard arrives. Worried and frightened, he grasps valise, shoves hat on head, runs out.
- Scene 95. INTERIOR—SMOKING ROOM OF YACHT.**  
Ormond, Beasley and Tracey conspiring best way out. Ormond thoughtful, suddenly draws out clipping of scene 17—flash clipping—Ormond points to it, says he has way out. Tracey relieved and interested. Heads close together. Ormond draws out cigar case of jewels, taps it, explains his plan—Ormond goes out, followed by others.
- Scene 96. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON.**  
Valda dreamily thinking of Morson—knock, she says "Come"—Ormond enters, approaches a little uncertain of his welcome. Valda turns and greets him coldly. Picks up magazine, ig-

nores him. Ormond begins to talk eagerly. She finally listens, impressed by his earnestness. While Valda is listening, Tracey enters. Valda motions Ormond to keep quiet, indicating Tracey. Ormond says it is all right—goes on:

**CUT-IN.** "Your rescued gentleman is a customs officer. He boarded the yacht by a trick to trap your father, who has placed some undeclared jewels in our trust."

Tracey nods corroboratively, and stares at Ormond in admiration. Valda springs in astonishment and anger. Ormond slowly draws clipping of scene 95 from pocket, hands it to Valda gravely. Valda reads, bites lips, sits, taps foot—registers dismay and apprehension. She asks to see jewels. Ormond, prepared, readily draws out cigar-case, handing it to her. She recognizes monogram of father, starts, is becoming convinced, empties jewels, examines. Cut.

**Scene 97. EXTERIOR—BEASLEY'S CABIN.**

Morson comes out. Morson is in first mate's dress uniform, looking very spick and span and handsome—lights cigarette, meditates, saunters away, musing.

**Scene 98. INTERIOR—CONTINUATION OF SCENE 96.** Valda is putting jewels back into bag and case. Morson walks past window outside. They see him. Valda half rises, looking toward him. Ormond sees him, indicates—

**CUT-IN.** "He plays on women's sympathies with a story of having come from Egypt with a fortune in jewels, and being robbed in a London hotel by masked burglars!"

Valda registers indignation at Morson. She will be on her guard. She calmly puts jewel case in her hand-bag, telling Ormond she will take care of them. Ormond bites his lips, with frown, Tracey makes a grab, but is restrained by Ormond, who makes the best of the situation. Valda rises and goes out, followed by Tracey and Ormond who exchange meaning looks, Tracey shaking head in worry.

**Scene 99. EXTERIOR—PORTION OF DECK.**

Valda walks on thoughtfully, sits in steamer chair—meditates. Morson in distance sights her, comes eagerly toward her. She looks up

as he approaches, cool, but can't resist interest in him. At his stopping by her side, she casually shifts handbag to opposite side from him—*this business all through scene*. He takes off cap and stands with bared head, thanking her for her aid in his "accident." She coolly deprecates his gratitude. He is a little dashed, but persistent. He asks if he may sit. She nods. He comes around to her other side and takes steamer chair. She shifts bag to the opposite side of chair, a little fearfully, and clutches it nervously. He sits and talks. The rug comes loose from her feet. He stoops gallantly and fixes it tenderly. She draws the bag up out of his reach—registers little panic. He talks on, not noticing her nervousness. Cut.

**Scene 100. EXTERIOR—FLASH ANOTHER SECTION OF DECK.**

Tracey and Ormond gazing toward Morson and Valda. Tracey almost wild with anxiety and suspense. Ormond, by contrast quiet, gazes quietly, with narrowed eyes. Men smoking.

**Scene 101. EXTERIOR—CONTINUATION OF SCENE 99.**

Morson talking to Valda. Valda looks at him a little suspiciously. The bag accidentally catches on steamer chair—falls. Morson gallantly leans over to pick it up. Valda quickly snatches it up and stares defiantly at him, to his complete amazement. Valda quickly changes expression to fixed smile. Tells him to go on with story. Aunt Mary and Polly listen interestedly as they come into scene. He tells of—fade out into

**Scene 102. SAME AS SCENE 16.  
Quick flash—fade out into—**

**Scene 103. SAME AS SCENE 6.  
Quick flash—the fight—fade out into.**

**Scene 104. CONTINUATION OF SCENE 101.**  
Morson finishes with last punch that ended fight and finds her contemplating him icily, with folded arms and mocking smile. Suddenly she becomes furious. She springs to her feet. The astonished Morson rises also. Valda, in a tempest of rage, denounces him as an imposter. He stares at her dazed. Ormond and Tracey, who have come into scene,

register triumph. Aunt Mary in amazement and rebuke. Polly stares at Valda as though she thinks her suddenly demented. Valda speaks:

CUT-IN.

"You are an imposter! The uniform of an officer doesn't suit you! You shall work your passage across!"

Morson stares at her in stunned astonishment, but sees her feeling is genuine. For an instant he is about to resent Valda's attack, but suddenly realizes the humor of the situation and grins. Beasley steps forward to take charge of him. Morson bows low, sweeping deck with cap. Beasley takes him by shoulder. Morson, right-about-face, marches off. Ormond and Tracey in triumph, Polly wringing hands in sorrow over her hero's fate, Aunt Mary rebuking. Valda, in rage, stares after him, and as all turn and leave her, sinks down in chair sobbing.

*End of Reel Three.*

### "THE SPITFIRE."

*Reel Four.*

#### Scene 105. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON.

Valda enters, looks about cautiously, goes to safe, kneels, works at combination. The sinister face of Ormond is seen at window. He glances in, sees her at safe, face lights up. He watches. She opens safe, takes jewel case from bag, puts it in safe. As she swings safe door shut, Ormond's face leaves window. Valda leaves cabin.

#### Scene 106. EXTERIOR—THE DECK.

Polly, Aunt Mary, Tracey on. Valda comes on and joins party. Morson comes into scene with tin box of cleaning powder and large rag in hands. He is dressed as ordinary seaman, but, most becomingly, wears blue jersey, duck trousers and canvas shoes, while a sailor hat is set at a rakish angle. Beasley ushers him on and points to rail, speaking roughly. Slight commotion when party recognizes the transformed Morson. Polly in distress, Aunt Mary sympathetic, Valda stern with an effort, Ormond hugely pleased. Morson sees Valda, frowns humorously; quickly followed by smile.

Following Beasley's orders, Morson rubs rag in powder and vigorously scrubs rail, standing back to get artistic result. Ormond is smiling. Morson works very gaily, whistling blithely, as though delighted with work. Valda shows irritation, picks up parasol—opens it. Morson glances toward parasol—keeps on whistling. Valda puts down parasol, moves off with nose in air. Tracey shakes with satisfied glee, takes cigar out of mouth to chuckle, laughs, suddenly sees Morson staring coldly at him with a vengeful look in his eye, and gasps with fear, shoving the wrong end of cigar in mouth, turning cigar about two or three times nervously before getting the right end. Morson works on nonchalantly. Others watch. Tracey walks off in response to significant glance from Ormond, who precedes.

**Scene 107. EXTERIOR—MAIN SALON—NEAR DOOR.**  
Ormond and Tracey come into scene, look through window—coast is clear. Ormond cautiously opens door, indicates safe, which can be seen through door, to Tracey. Tracey makes a movement to go in as Ormond signifies jewels are in it. Ormond holds him back and they pass on.

**Scene 108. EXTERIOR—ANOTHER PORTION OF DECK AT RAIL.**

Valda standing at rail, very angry, foot tapping impatiently. Morson approaches with rag and box, sees her, passes on. Suddenly he turns. She has turned to look at him. Then, angry at his having seen this, turns shoulder again, abruptly, and studies ocean. He hesitates, and then comes to her. He tries to talk to her, but she refuses to listen. He speaks:

**CUT-IN** "I don't blame you! If somebody told me the tale I told you, I wouldn't believe it myself. At the same time, my jewels are on this yacht, and when we land in New York I'll have the whole crew of you arrested—*EX-OEPT AUNT MARY!*"

He finishes his speech, audaciously shaking his finger near her face. She backs away, perfectly furious—stamps her foot in rage. He goes away laughing at her discomfiture.

Gradually her face softens into a tender little smile, and she gives sentimental sigh, looking dreamily off to sea.

- Scene 109. EXTERIOR—ANOTHER PORTION OF DECK. Polly alone at rail. Morson passes, nods to Polly, who smiles very sweetly as he lifts his cap. Encouraged by her friendly manner, he looks back a little as he passes, smiling. When he goes, Polly sighs sentimentally and clasps hands ecstatically.

LEADER.

THAT NIGHT.

- Scene 110. INTERIOR—GIRARD'S ROOM IN LONDON. Girard comes in, evidently after a few days' absence. Mail piled high on desk, unopened. Girard walks in and storms about for the valet—gradually works himself into rage—slams valise down, goes into next room, comes out storming, muttering imprecations, shoves hat back on head, goes to desk, prepares to rummage through mail on desk, finds opened envelope containing message from Larris (of scene 76), picks it up, scratches head, pulls out message, reads—flash message. Girard stands stunned. Then realizes that some mischief is intended, shoves hat hastily down on head, still holding message in hand, grabs up valise again, rushes out.

- Scene 111. EXTERIOR—DECK OF SPITFIRE.—NIGHT TINT.

Polly and Morson sitting in shadow of boat—mild flirtation—Polly chatting vivaciously, Morson smiling.

- Scene 112. ANOTHER PORTION OF DECK.

Valda walks down deck in long steamer coat, suddenly spies Morson and Polly, becomes extremely jealous, marches toward them indignantly.

- Scene 113. DECK NEAR SMALL BOAT (SAME AS SCENE 111).

Morson is about to playfully take Polly's hand when Valda appears and speaks sternly to them. Polly is terrified; Morson amused. Valda speaks to Morson:

- CUT-IN. "You are to have no conversation with my guests!"

Morson smiles amusedly, bows gravely to Polly, ironically to Valda, and walks away.

Polly, in tempest of tears, turns and marches away. Valda sits in steamer chair, gazes ahead moodily—hurt. Indicates she is now deeply in love with Morson.

Scene 114. EXTERIOR—CALAIS PIER—DAYLIGHT, FULL.

Girard talks with a yacht captain, climbing aboard another yacht he has chartered. (Yacht's name must be plainly seen to avoid confusion with "Spitfire.")

Scene 115. INTERIOR—WIRELESS ROOM OF YACHT (OF SCENE 115). (Note—May be same wireless room used in previous scenes, with little change and different operator.)

Girard into room, excited; tells the operator.

CUT-IN. "Locate the yacht 'Spitfire,' en route to New York!"

Operator looks up. Girard irritable. Captain enters, as though accompanying Girard, explains to operator. Operator nods, begins to send. Girard angrily and profanely discussing matter with captain. Cut.

Scene 116. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON OF "SPITFIRE"—CLOSE UP.

Polly on, kneeling on cushioned seat that runs about port-holes. Morson's grinning face can be seen through port-hole. Polly has sandwich. He opens mouth. She puts whole sandwich in his mouth. Cut.

LEADER: MORSON GETS A HAND-OUT

Scene 117. EXTERIOR—DECK OUTSIDE PORT-HOLE. Morson withdraws head with sandwich in mouth, takes sandwich out with one hand, extends other hand through port-hole for grateful handshake, just as Valda comes into scene. Valda stands for an instant. Morson takes hasty glance at her, withdraws hand quickly, and walks rapidly away. Polly's hand comes through port-hole, groping frantically for him. Valda stares in angry amazement, then she walks angrily to door of salon and enters.

Scene 118. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON—OTHER SIDE OF PORT-HOLE.

Polly waving hand through port-hole as Valda enters. She hears Valda, hastily draws out hand, turns to face the indignant Valda. Polly goes meekly to Valda, who spurns her.

**Scene 119. INTERIOR—WIRELESS ROOM ON OTHER YACHT—SAME AS SCENE 116.**

Girard walks in, inquires of operator if any news of "Spitfire." Operator shakes head. Girard registers disapproval of operator and whole d— thing, smites fist on table, goes out, slamming door. Operator leans back, gazing after him, shrugs shoulders, goes back to work.

**Scene 120. EXTERIOR—DECK OF "SPITFIRE."**

Morson polishing brasses of yacht with the cleansing powder. Valda comes into scene, imperatively beckons him to her with finger, as to a servant. With a mock sailor-like hitch of his trousers, Morson, can of powder and rag in hand, comes to her. She points to rail, rubs finger across it—"Not clean enough." He touches cap gravely, polishes it briskly. She talks to him a little, as though rebuking him for his carelessness. He listens with perky look on face, hitches his trousers again as he listens, gravely rubs rag in cleansing powder and pretends to polish his nails. Valda, exasperated by his pretense, stamps foot—exclaims:

**CUT-IN.**

"I wish you were back in the sea again!" Morson points gravely to the sea—"Does she mean it?" She nods vehemently. With a spring, he is over the side, clinging to a rope on the side, though she is not aware of rope, and thinks him overboard. Valda, with wild cry, rushes toward the pilot house, calling to Captain Larris to stop the ship. There is instant excitement of all on board—all rushing toward her.

**Scene 121. EXTERIOR—VIEW OUTSIDE OF HULL OF YACHT.**

Morson clinging to rope hung on davit, out of view of those on deck, grinning mischievously.

**Scene 122. EXTERIOR OF "SPITFIRE."**

People running toward rail. Polly, wringing hands, grabs boat-hook. Aunt Mary tears off life preserver from rail, throws it aimlessly, faints—supported by the excited and delighted Tracey, who nearly drops her at times in his wild anxiety to glimpse the drowning figure of Morson—off. Ormond and Beasley also register pleased relief, and pretended solic-



tude. Valda alone quiet, tense, hands clenched, repentant and grief-stricken. As Captain Larris is about to order boat lowered, the anxious Tracey, holding the fainting Aunt Mary, presses close to the rail, and looks over rail. He suddenly sees Morson, safe and clinging to rope. In his disappointed disgust, Tracey drops Aunt Mary with a thump, and she immediately comes to. Tracey points over shoulder with thumb to rail and walks off. Others crowd to rail—register relief and surprise to see Morson safe. Ormond and Beasley alone disappointed, though pretend otherwise after a second. Polly clasps hands in delight. Valda, hand on heart, sways a little in revulsion of feeling; then her relief is mastered by indignation and she imperiously beckons Morson back. He sheepishly clambers back over rail, with assistance of sailors, saying apologetically to the angry Valda:

**CUT-IN.**

"I almost got my feet wet!"

Valda stamps foot in anger, turns indignantly and walks away.

**Scene 123.**

**EXTERIOR—ANOTHER PORTION OF DECK.** Valda comes down deck and approaches Beasley, who is standing morosely against rail. She points back to Morson, seen in distance, talking to the excited Polly, and speaks:

**CUT-IN.**

"He hasn't enough to do. Give him some real work!"

Beasley accepts this suggestion, very pleased, bows—off to Morson.

**Scene 124.**

**EXTERIOR—ANOTHER PORTION OF DECK.** Polly comes on, accompanied by Ormond and Tracey, who are trying to be very gallant. Polly is annoyed, showing plainly she has little use for either. She drops her small mesh-bag. Both men stoop gallantly, Tracey nearly getting it, but Polly is quicker, and rescues the purse herself, showing satisfaction purposely; then, with a meaning look at both men, turns and leaves them. Ormond shrugs shoulders, smiles grimly at Tracey's discomfiture—they walk on.

**Scene 125.**

**EXTERIOR—STILL ANOTHER PORTION OF DECK.**

Beasley enters, followed by Morson. Morson carries a bucket of water and a mop with a

long handle, scrubbing brush protrudes from bucket. Beasley carries holy-stone, concealed behind his back. Morson looks humbly resigned, as though going through an ordeal. Ormond and Tracey pass and register thorough satisfaction. Morson makes gesture as though about to throw bucket at them, but thinks better of it and proceeds on with it. Beasley stops and shows Morson portion of deck he is to scrub—Morson sets down bucket—Beasley slowly produces the holy-stone—shows it to Morson. Morson pretends to examine it as through opera glasses. Beasley frowns, puts stone down on deck. Morson puts long-handled mop in bucket, starts to push holy-stone along with it—Beasley interrupts him—"It isn't done that way"—gets down on marrowbones and illustrates, with action, method of holy-stone. With a grimace at him Morson reluctantly gets down on knees as Beasley rises and goes at his work. Beasley registers satisfaction at the humiliation.

**Scene 126. EXTERIOR—PORTION OF DECK AT DISTANCE.**

Camera follows Ormond and Tracey, with Valda in center, down deck, Polly and Aunt Mary following. The two men point out distant view of Morson scrubbing, with satisfaction to Valda, whose triumph is marred by her own secret sympathy with Morson. She turns away a little. Polly and Aunt Mary register disapproval. With a little sly look of glee toward Ormond and Tracey, Beasley raises his foot, and quickly placing it against Morson's shoulder, pushes him violently, so that Morson falls flat on his face in the soapy water. Valda turns just in time to see this cowardly act. Morson leaps to his feet, is about to rush toward Beasley, when he catches sight of Valda. With a great effort he controls himself, bows to Valda and is about to return to his work. Beasley laughs and Valda, with an outburst of fury, turns to Morson and speaks:

**CUT-IN.**

"Mr. Morson, as mistress of this yacht, I give you full permission to avenge that insult to the limit of your strength and will."  
Morson steps back with wondering unbelief,

while Beasley and others also show their amazement. Morson thanks Valda and without more ado, goes for Beasley. (The fight should be a short, sharp, decisive affair, with Morson as victor, ending with Beasley prostrate with Morson standing over him.) The sailors all cheer. Valda shows quiet delight in Morson's triumph. Cut.

**LEADER.** A FEW DAYS LATER—WIRELESS LOCATES "SPITFIRE" ALMOST WITHIN VISION OF GIRARD'S VESSEL.

**Scene 127.** INTERIOR—WIRELESS ROOM ON GIRARD'S CHARTERED YACHT (SAME AS SCENE 119).

Girard on, is told by operator he has located "Spitfire." Girard joyful, begins to dictate message. Cut.

**Scene 128.** EXTERIOR—DECK OF YACHT "SPITFIRE." Ormond and Larris talking, Tracey at hand—wireless operator comes on deck with message, looks for Larris—gives him transcript of messages—Larris reads. Flash message:

**INSERT.** Capt. Larris,  
Yacht Spitfire.

Take charge of ship immediately. Will overtake you soon. Reduce speed and await instructions.

**MARCUS GIRARD.**

Larris triumphantly shows wire to Ormond, whose eyelids flicker, but does not otherwise betray emotion. As a matter of course, and as though expecting message, he bows, says a few words to captain, and strolls off easily. The captain looks after the nonchalant Ormond, puzzled, shakes head—the situation has "got him" all right. Tracey joins Ormond, they walk down deck.

**Scene 129.** INTERIOR—SMOKING ROOM.

Ormond and Tracey in—they sit with heads together, worried. Ormond outlines action—Tracey listening. Beasley comes in, all talk, finally Ormond, with quick decision, says:

**CUT-IN.** "Tonight!"

**LEADER.** WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT.

**Scene 130.** STRETCH OF SEA—NIGHT TINT.

The "Spitfire" and other yacht, all lighted up, against solid black night, and stars.

**Scene 131. EXTERIOR—DECK OF SPITFIRE—NIGHT.**  
Ormond and Tracey at rail, look off and see lights of the other yacht. They prime themselves for action.

**Scene 132. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON.**  
Valda sitting by table reading by lights—she hears knock, goes to door, opens it cautiously—it is Morson, clad in Beasley's long oilcoat—she starts to close door, mocking him impertinently—he places foot in door, she can't shut it—finally she allows him to come in—they stand a moment, talking, tender little scene—he takes her hand as he says good night, she pulls it away gently—she indicates now that she can no longer conceal her love for him. He says good night and closes door. She stands a moment and goes to port-hole, looks after him tenderly, shakes head sadly—still thinks him spy, though she loves him. She goes to door, right, and hesitates a moment, then turns out lights. Room in darkness.

**LEADER. MORSON REMEMBERS THE DECK HAND'S LAST DUTY FOR THE NIGHT.**

**Scene 133. INTERIOR—BEASLEY AND MORSON'S CABIN.**

Morson comes on, takes off coat as he goes in and about to undress, when he remembers he has forgotten to take in the chairs—leaving coat he goes out.

**Scene 134. EXTERIOR—DECK.**

Morson gathering up steamer chairs.

**Scene 135. EXTERIOR—BEASLEY AND MORSON'S CABIN.**

Ormond and Beasley come on cautiously—Beasley glances through port-hole or window—no one there—Beasley opens door, reaches and gets coat Morson wore and hands to Ormond—men off.

**Scene 136. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON (AS IN SCENE 133).**

Very dim light—flash at door of burglar's lantern—figure in long coat of Morson goes to safe, working away at safe, blows it open, steals jewels—to door—just as man gets to door, Valda in doorway of her room, in time to see figure of man dart from door in Morson's coat—look of horror, registering she

thinks it Morson, covers face—the room only lighted by dim rays from port-holes and the burglar's light left by man in his haste. Valda takes the burglar's light and goes to safe—kneels, looks through rifled safe.

**Scene 137. EXTERIOR—OUTSIDE MAIN SALON.**

Morson rounds the corner gathering steamer chairs—by this porthole he stops, transfixed by what he accidentally glimpses through the port-hole—he steps nearer, and gazes in horror at Valda in room. He puts down chair, he walks away dazed and overwhelmed—disappears around corner. Valda rushes out of door with wild excitement, but no outcry—she knocks at various doors, groups come out, she notifies them. Cut.

**LEADER.**

**NEXT MORNING.**

**Scene 138. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON.**

Valda and all on—she shows the captain the rifled safe, Aunt Mary and Polly register great excitement. Ormond and Tracey saunter in, looking cool and interested. Beasley looks at Ormond and Tracey, but quickly looks away. Captain begins to question them all—finally questions Valda. After struggle with herself she turns, looks toward Morson while speaking, points to him and safe, indicates she saw him at safe. Morson staggers back and looks at her in stunned amazement, indicating that his feeling for his own position is less than his loss of faith in her. He passes hand across his eyes, stares at her, but makes no denial. Captain speaks:

**CUT-IN.** “Do you deny that you were in the main salon at midnight?”

**CUT-IN LEADER.** **MORSON CANNOT REPLY.**

Morson looks long and steadily at Valda, refuses to answer. Valda's eyes drop and she registers emotion. Captain Larris gives orders, they search Morson and bind him to post. Valda crushed. All register dismay at Morson's implied guilt. Cut.

**Scene 139. INTERIOR—HOLD OF YACHT.**

Fire breaks out, sailor discovers, excitedly runs off.

**Scene 140. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON (SAME AS SCENE 138).**

Varied business on parts of Polly, Aunt Mary, Valda, Ormond, Tracey, captain, etc. Morson still bound to pillar of cabin. Sailor rushes in to captain, says "Fire!" Others overhear and register wild panic. Captain Larris, after momentary shock, rushes out, giving orders—all rush out in pandemonium, leaving Morson alone, bound—smoke curls in.

**Scene 141. QUICK FLASH OF HOLD (SAME AS SCENE 139).**

Flame now big and strong. Captain Larris and men appear, but are driven back by fire and smoke.

**Scene 142. EXTERIOR—UPPER DECK.**

Women all huddled together. Polly weeping, Aunt Mary praying, Valda tense, suddenly thinks of Morson, turns, rushes off.

**Scene 143. EXTERIOR—DECK OF PURSUING YACHT.**

Captain, Girard and others at rail, much nearer to "Spitfire" now than in night scene—see smoke of "Spitfire." Girard registers great fear and anxiety—much excitement—captain gives quick orders to increase speed.

**Scene 144. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON OF "SPITFIRE" (SAME AS SCENE 140).**

Morson alone, bound—smoke volumes increasing—Valda rushes in—looks about frantically for some means of releasing him.

**Scene 145. EXTERIOR—DECK OF "SPITFIRE."**

Lifeboats being lowered—Polly and Aunt Mary being shoved into boat by captain, Beasley and others. Ormond and Tracey at rail, register sudden resolve to finish Morson. Ormond, gun in hand, followed by Tracey, starts off.

**Scene 146. INTERIOR—MAIN SALON (AS IN SCENE 144).**

Valda cutting cords with knife she finds in desk—Ormond and Tracey come in, are dumbfounded at the sight of Valda—with a spring, Morson, freed, is upon Ormond, wrests away gun, holds Ormond and Tracey at bay—then hands gun to Valda, fights Ormond with bare hands while Valda holds the terrified Tracey easily at bay. Smoke rushing on thicker and thicker—desperate fight between men. Quick,

Tracey, recovering from fright, makes threatening movement, is knocked out by Morson. Morson gets mastery over Ormond, knocks him down, searches pockets, finds dangerous-looking knife, throws it aside, searches again, as if for more weapons, finds the morocco cigar case, starts to throw aside, when Valda gives cry of astonishment—he looks at her, opens case, finds his jewels—he registers delighted surprise and mental vindication for Valda (Valda same business for him). Smoke and flames now appear. Morson thrusts jewels in belt. Valda overcome. Morson rushes off, half carrying Valda. Tracey and Ormond stagger to their feet and follow.

**Scene 147. EXTERIOR—DECK OF SPITFIRE.**

Flames mounting high, the captain stands on the bridge watchful and waiting, tense—commanding, heroic figure. Morson is seen rushing through the smoke, carrying Valda. For a moment he bends over her, kisses her, then on to the rail. Boats seen rowing hastily off toward other yacht. Flames envelop the yacht. Cut.

**Scene 148. EXTERIOR—EXPANSE OF WATER.**

Distant view of the charred hulk of the "Spitfire" descending into the sea.

**Scene 149. EXTERIOR—DECK OF GIRARD'S OTHER YACHT.**

Girard, captain and others at rail. Boat reaches yacht. Girard scans faces in boat in vain for his daughter. Tears his hair in anxiety and grief. Levels glasses and scans water.

**Scene 150. EXTERIOR—EXPANSE OF OCEAN.**

In foreground, charred spar of ship with Valda and Morson clinging to it, Morson supporting Valda. A little bit off a larger piece of wreckage to which cling Beasley, Ormond, Tracey and Captain Larris.

**Scene 151. EXTERIOR—DECK OF GIRARD'S OTHER YACHT—SHORT FLASH.**

Girard, looking through glasses, spots daughter on spar. Excitedly tells captain, they lower boat. Cut.

**Scene 152. EXTERIOR—ROCKY BEACH.**

Valda and Morson on beach, spar lies near them. They look off at sea and then tenderly

at each other. Morson draws pouch from belt, thrusts in hand, takes out some jewels, from which he selects diamond ring—puts it on her finger—speaks:

CUT-IN. "You called me a thief—and I am! I'm going to steal you!"  
She goes to his arms.

Scene 153. FLASH TO BEACH.  
Father lands in boat, gets out with one or two sailors, runs up beach, stops short in paralyzed indignation at what he sees.

Scene 154. EXTERIOR—BEACH (AS IN SCENE 152).  
Valda still in Morson's arms. Father storms angrily into scene. Morson looks at him, annoyed at interruption. Valda sees father, flies to his arms, and after embrace, and then turning, points to Morson, says:

CUT-IN. "Father, Mr. Morson, a traveler from Egypt!"  
Father angry, eyes Morson, sternly, then grins slowly, extends his hand. Fade out.

*End of "The Spitfire."*

The following is a brief adaptation from Dickens' "Pickwick Papers." The amateur should note there is no difference in the technical construction of these stories, compared to the construction of an original theme, except in the version or credit of authorship.

### *The One-Part Adaptation.*

"MR. JINGLE'S PLOT."

From Dicken's "Pickwick Papers."

Version by John E. Doe.

#### CAST.

*Mr. Pickwick.....President "Pickwick Club"*  
*Mr. Winkle.....Member of "Pickwick Club"*  
*Mr. Tupman.....Member of "Pickwick Club"*  
*Mr. Snodgrass.....Member of "Pickwick Club"*  
*Mr. Alfred Jingle.....Of Nohall, Nowhere*  
*Mr. Wardle.....Of Manor Farm, Dingley Dell*



*Miss Rachel*.....*His sister*  
*Mr. Samuel Weller*....*"Boots" at the "White Hart"*  
*Mr. Perker*.....*Wardle's solicitor*  
*Dr. Slammer*.....*Of the 97th*  
*Fat Boy* .....  
*Dr. Slammer's friends, guests at charity ball, etc.*

## SYNOPSIS.

Members of the Pickwick Club meet Mr. Jingle, a strolling player. After a convivial dinner at a Rochester inn, Mr. Jingle borrows Mr. Winkle's Pickwickian regalia and accompanies Mr. Tupman to a charity ball. Mr. Jingle proceeds to vanquish Dr. Slammer in the game of love and refuses the doctor's card. Slammer's friend, looking for the owner of the peculiar coat, mistakes Mr. Winkle for the party, and Winkle is drawn into a duel, ignorant of the cause thereof. Just before shots are exchanged, Dr. Slammer discovers Winkle is not the man desired; he finds Jingle instead, who is recognized by Slammer's friend as the strolling actor, Mr. Jingle. Later, Jingle joins the Pickwicks at Manor farm and encounters the spinster sister of Wardle, receiving a marriage proposal from Mr. Tupman. Mr. Jingle plots against Mr. Tupman and succeeds in getting Miss Wardle to elope with him. The Fat Boy gives the alarm and Mr. Wardle and Mr. Pickwick give chase. By the aid of Samuel Weller, the pursuers surprise Mr. Jingle and Miss Wardle at the White Hart, London, just as Mr. Jingle prepares for a wedding ceremony. Mr. Jingle is bribed to desert Miss Wardle, and she, finally discovering that the actor loves only her money, is prostrated. Mr. Pickwick vows he will relentlessly pursue Mr. Jingle to the end of the earth, in which Mr. Samuel Weller declares he will join.

*The Action.*

## Scene 1. INTERIOR, ROCHESTER INN.

Pickwick, Winkle, Tupman and Snodgrass enter, followed by Mr. Jingle. The latter, out at elbows, makes himself agreeable to others. Glasses 'round and introductions. Drinks are enjoyed. Pickwick party garbed in coats bearing Pickwick button and peculiarly cut. Jingle admires coats aside. Tupman and Jingle drink together while others exit. Through open doorway, rear, musicians and others seen ascending stairs to chamber above. Jingle curious. Summons waiter and inquires. Tupman invites Jin-

gle as a guest. Jingle refers to shabby appearance. Tupman, somewhat warmed by wine, consents to borrow Mr. Winkle's coat. Tupman exits. Jingle takes another drink.

**Scene 2. INTERIOR, SIDE ROOM OF INN.**

Winkle and a friend discovered, conversing. Tupman enters. Asks Winkle for coat. Explanations. Gets coat and exits to

**Scene 3. SAME AS SCENE 1.**

Jingle at table. Tupman enters with coat on arm. Jingle dons coat. They flip coin to see who shall buy tickets. Jingle wins. Tupman buys tickets and he and Jingle exit arm in arm to stairway in rear.

**Scene 4. INTERIOR, BALLROOM.**

Tupman and Jingle enter. Mingle with guests, Jingle with usual annoying attitude. Dr. Slammer pays attention to widow guest. Leaves her side for instant. Jingle thrusts himself into Slammer's place. Widow drops fan. Jingle picks it up. He is most gallant. He darts away. Widow smiles after him. He returns with master of ceremonies. Introduction follows. Jingle takes widow's hand and is about to walk away when Dr. Slammer enters. Slammer wild with rage. Jingle just smiles. Dr. Slammer presents card. Jingle reads, then tears card up. Slammer would fight. Tupman enters, interfects as guests gather about. Dr. Slammer rushes from scene, vowing vengeance.

**LEADER**

**THE NEXT MORNING.**

**Scene 5. SAME AS SCENE 1.**

A friend of Slammer's enters. Inquires of waiter for man wearing peculiar coat. Describes him. Tall, slim man. Description answers appearance of both Jingle and Winkle. Waiter believes Winkle is man wanted. Exits. Returns with Winkle. Slammer's friend bears challenge from the doctor.

**CUT-IN LEADER. A CHALLENGE FROM DR. SLAMMER.**

Back to scene. Winkle is bewildered. Acknowledges ownership of coat as described. Exits and returns with coat on arm. All examine it. Look closely at letters P. C. on it. Dr. Slammer's friend produces two pistols. Winkle agrees to fight.

**Scene 6. EXTERIOR, FIELD NEAR ROCHESTER.**

Winkle, accompanied by Mr. Pickwick, Snodgrass and Jingle, enter. Winkle plainly shows fear, but tries to be brave. Efforts comical. Dr. Slammer and friend enter. Slammer's friend paces off distance and places duelists. Winkle accepts gun from Slammer's friend. Both combatants ready to fire. Dr. Slammer suddenly drops pistol to ground, rubs eyes. Confusion. Slammer exclaims:

**CUT-IN.**

"This is not the man!"

Back to scene. "Of course not," replies Winkle. Slammer and friend walk to other party. Slammer points out Jingle. Friend gazes at him, then scornfully at others, and exclaims:

**CUT-IN.**

"Why, he is only a traveling player!"

Back to scene. Slammer and friend leave field, looking disdainfully, while Winkle boasts to admiring friends.

**Scene 7. EXTERIOR, REGIMENTAL REVIEW FIELD, NEAR ROCHESTER.**

Crowd assembled to see maneuvers. Pickwick, Winkle, Snodgrass get in way of approaching soldiers. Shouts of warning bewilder the trio. All three knocked down and soldiers pass on. Snodgrass applies handkerchief to stop nose bleeding. Pickwick hunts hat. Hears a voice. Sees Tupman standing before adjacent conveyance. Pickwick approaches on summons. Pickwick is recognized by Old Man Wardle. Fat Boy on front seat awakened by Wardle. Fat Boy descends and assists in arranging seats for all. Fat Boy falls asleep again while introductions are in progress. Awakened again by Mr. Wardle and serves food. Tupman plainly smitten by charms of Rachel. Wardle invites and insists on all going to Manor farm, indicating way. Pickwick part accepts. All exeunt.

**LEADER.**

OFF FOR DINGLEY DELL.

**Scene 8. SAME AS SCENE 6.**

Pickwick and Wardle party from Scene 7. All take leave of Mr. Jingle, who promises to join others later. Departure of old-fashioned conveyance. Jingle looks after departing persons, as he plots to himself.

**Scene 9. INTERIOR PARLOR, WARDLE HOME, MANOR FARM.**

All from Scene 8 except Jingle. Wardle and Pickwickians have just arrived. Are tired, but whilst is proposed. All play but Tupman and Miss Wardle, who are seen to talk confidentially.

**Scene 10. EXTERIOR, GARDEN OF MANOR FARM.**

Tupman and Miss Wardle enter slowly. Approach a bower. Tupman proposes to Miss Wardle, falling upon his knees. Jingle jauntily enters. Discovers lovers. Watches. Something stables him. He disappears. Fat Boy enters. Looks on lovers' scene. Laughs. Miss Wardle gives shriek. Tupman hastily regains feet. Fat Boy hands message to Tupman. He and Fat Boy exit. Miss Wardle lost in reverie. Jingle approaches her. Bows gallantly. Impresses spinster. He motions after departing Tupman. She succumbs to Jingle's advances. He falls upon his knees. Urges her to elope. She ponders. He pleads. She consents. They exit as Fat Boy comes into scene, looking after fleeing couple. He gets idea. He waddles away to give alarm.

**Scene 11. INTERIOR, WARDLE DINING-ROOM.**

Supper laid, chairs drawn up; bottles, jugs, glasses arranged. Wardle and others enter. He sees sister's chair vacant. Tupman also sees it and is uneasy. Fat Boy blunders into scene, blubbering out elopement. Consternation. Women bring great coats of Wardle and Pickwick. Tupman faints. Wardle and Pickwick hastily exit.

**Scene 12. EXTERIOR, YARD OF WHITE HART INN.**

Samuel Weller polishes guests' boots. Wardle, Pickwick and Mr. Perker enter. Ask Weller if he has seen Jingle and Miss Wardle, describing them. Weller holds up pair of woman's shoes. Wardle recognizes them as his sister's. Perker hands Weller a coin. Weller tells others to follow, and all exit into inn.

**Scene 13. INTERIOR, RACHEL WARDLE'S APARTMENT.**

Spinster primps before mirror. Starts at summons on door. Simpers as Jingle enters. They embrace. He says he will go for marriage certificate. Places hat on head rather rakishly, prepares to exit. Rachel happy. Door bursts open

and Weller enters, followed by Wardle, Perker and Pickwick. Weller points to Miss Wardle. She shrieks and covers face with hands. Wardle in rage. He grabs Jingle and is about to choke him to plainly apparent satisfaction of Weller when Perker interferes. Jingle signifies that Miss Wardle is of legal age and can do as she pleases. Spinster still faithful to Jingle. Jingle orders Wardle to stand aside from door. He has upper hand. Wardle, Perker and Pickwick confer in corner. Perker approaches Jingle. They converse. Jingle shakes head to persuasions of Perker. Finally consents to Perker's proposition and Wardle gets out pocketbook and counts money into Jingle's hands. Jingle starts to leave. Spinster rushes to him. He waves her aside, and she faints into Wardle's arms. From doorway, Jingle smilingly surveys group while he places the money in his pocket. Pickwick throws himself into comic attitude of belligerency and makes a dash for Jingle. Jingle closes door in Pickwick's face as he hurries away. Weller is pleased with Pickwick's attitude and he shakes his hand.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### GETTING THE EDITOR'S EYE.

THE first thing to strike the eye of the studio editor is the appearance of the submitted scenario. The personality of the writer is imprinted on the first sheet of his story in such scenario form, even regardless of proper technique, as to catch the editor's eye. The writer's inability to do this lies in the preparing of his script from the title page to the last.

The very fact that there is a correct form in which the scenario is to be submitted is the reason that every author should conform to it. Without form, method or rule it would be a tedious job for the reader and editor to go over the vast number of manuscripts submitted daily.

The name and address of the author should be placed in the upper *left-hand* corner of the first and second sheets of the story and also in the lower *left-hand* corner of the last page. Many amateur writers fail to do this, enclosing stamps only, and thus their story is never returned and the studio holding it is immediately put down as having stolen it. Editors and studio employees are not infallible. Scripts submitted without names and addresses on them, but with self-addressed envelope for re-

turn, may become lost because, perhaps, the envelope may become displaced and separated from the scenario itself. This is no direct fault of the editor, nor perhaps the result of system and, therefore, if every author would see that his name and address is on the story there would be little possibility of the story not being returned.

### *Submitting a Story.*

There is something unusual in a story when the first page is given wholly to the synopsis and perhaps even the second page or most of it is used for that purpose, even though the story be a split-reel subject. This is one way of catching the editor's eye, but it is not a profitable one because the script that uses a page or a page and a half for synopsis is immediately stamped, ordinarily, as the work of an amateur, and perhaps would not get the consideration that it would have received had it been condensed.

Cast of characters should come first, yet many amateurs leave out the cast entirely, and a story without a cast is not read; it is returned to the writer and he may never know the reason of its rejection.

Original typewritten copies only should be submitted, a copy of which should be kept by the author, and no story should be submitted to more than one studio at a time. Three to six weeks should be allowed to elapse before the author should inquire at the studio regard-

ing a story. Ordinarily, with reputable companies, the longer a story is kept the better chance it has of being purchased, although most companies advise an author that the story is held for consideration when it has been in their hands several weeks, thus relieving the anxiety of the writer.

### *How to Send a Story.*

The writer who has sold one story or the author that has written several knows that stories should be written on a good grade of paper 8½x11 inches, placed within a self-addressed, stamped envelope, mailed in a larger one to the studio with full postage paid, but there are amateur writers every day who do not know these requirements and for whom these suggestions are made. *Do not enclose postage stamps*—always send self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of story. Never write a letter to the editor explaining the action of the story, how it was originated, what it is worth or why it is submitted, for, if the editor wants to hear from the author, he will write him.

Very seldom is an amateur writer capable of setting a price on his work. Any reputable studio will pay its full value and all stories submitted should be at the studio's regular rates and this should be noted on the upper righthand corner of the first and second pages of the manuscript by the words "submitted at usual rates."



A manuscript should never be rolled, but should always be folded twice and sent flat. Any color of ribbon, except red, will do; black preferred. Do not put in interlineations with pen, better rewrite the story and give it the appearance of neatness and carefulness. Never write the name and address on the script with pen or pencil, keep every page clean and uniform from start to finish.

*An Attractive Script.*

Another point in the effectiveness of a submitted story is to have the scenes properly divided, leaders correctly placed, inserts rightly utilized and most of all "cut-ins" or the dialogue of characters fitted in at the right point. Quotation marks should never be used except in inserts and leaders where the quotation of a character will more clearly explain the action or to emphasize a particular part of the story, and always make the quoted parts as brief as possible because the characters talk in climax situations only.

Every author should put himself in the editor's chair and be governed by the position he holds and the work he has to do. The editor's view point of a manuscript may differ, in fact it generally does differ, from that of the author and yet if that author put feeling and interest in the play any capable editor will grasp the point and follow out the writer's intent. There is only one way to write a photoplay script and that is the right way, both as to preparation

and construction. The mechanical preparation of a story requires mechanical methods only—it is not a difficult thing to accomplish, but in the accomplishing the author should bear in mind the fact that the scenario submitted should be made so strikingly attractive in plot and story that it will get the editor's eye.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### STUDIO HONESTY.

THERE is no bugaboo barrier that confronts the average amateur photoplaywright like that of his believing that his ideas will be "stolen" or "copied" in the studio. There never was a greater mistake, and although the cry is occasionally heard that an idea has been appropriated, when such rumors are run down they are found to be without foundation—absolutely so. Coupled with the necessary ability of the editor to hold his position is also that quality of honesty that is not surpassed by any writer outside of the studio. There have been times when an idea has been appropriated in the studio by some hired second-class reader, perhaps, but immediately this has been discovered, this reader has lost his position and he cannot obtain another in any other studio. This has been demonstrated a number of times, showing that the editors and producers desire to employ only honest workers.

#### *Similarity of Stories.*

As long as plots are taken from newspaper items, so long will there be similarity in submitted photoplay scenarios. When any unusual occurrence takes place, whether it be a

scandalous divorce proceeding, the unearthing of a political plot, the corruption of a corporation, the confession of a reformed gambler, the publishing of the love letters of a noted man, the trying of a famous murder case, a city's naming a woman for mayor, the horsewhipping of a southern editor, the rescue of a young shop girl by a millionaire's son in the Atlantic surf, the rise and fall of a governor, or the revealing dual role of a minister, these various things are seized upon by writers, amateur and professional, in all parts of the country, and the consequence is that every studio is immediately flooded with photoplay plots taken from such incidents and occurrences. *All* of such expressed photoplay ideas cannot be available. As a rule, immediately upon the announcement of some important occurrence such as noted herein, some staff writer or the editor himself will immediately write a story around it, having it produced immediately so that it will be placed upon the market and become a timely production. Take, for instance, the Thaw trial; it had not been on for more than a few days when there were three Thaw plays being exhibited throughout the country.

*Plays from News Items.*

The better way for writers to do when newspaper plots are taken is simply to use the thought or idea of the item, then twist the story into such a diametrically different shape that,

while it contains the germ of the plot, it immediately becomes available because it does not have the striking similarity that other plots have that are taken from the same article. On any one incident, as a rule, one photoplay may be exhibited by any one studio, therefore the other stories around the same theme are rejected. The owners of these rejected stories in many cases, not weighing the matter carefully, become imbued with the idea that *their plot* has been used by the studio to which it had been submitted, when they learn by seeing upon the screen a story produced and released similar to theirs. Here is where the editor of the studio is blamed for plot stealing. No accusation could be more unfair.

### *False Suspicion.*

The wail often comes up that "my stories won't sell" and the sole trouble lies in the fact that such stories may have been shown before. Many plays are woven around plots that are so old that they immediately become hackneyed in the studio. For instances, the idea of the young man who goes West to make his fortune, the automobile accident, the scar on the arm as means of identification, the locket, the lost and united brother and sister theme, the eviction of a family, the deserted mother sewing for a living, the reformed burglar, the brave priest, the courageous cowboy, the old inventor. the heiress and, most of all, the old

theme of an uncle dying at a critical point in the story, leaving his wealth to a nephew in embarrassing circumstances just in time to bring about a reconciliation with his sweetheart. Failure is written in such stories unless the theme is so treated that the idea stands out preeminently new—clothed in a new dress and given an entirely different twist and “punch.” All such themes as these are being written daily by amateur writers and create in the minds of such authors the false suspicion that the studios have stolen their brilliant original photoplay plots.

*Accusing the Editors.*

It is almost an unexplainable thing why even original plots of different writers show a similarity and a cross-current of thought seems to underly their imagination, visualization and idea of plot-making in the same way. It may be called a psychological coincidence, but whether thus defined or left purely to the mind of the individual author, the studio editor must not be blamed for the appropriation of ideas, because the editor is simply placed in the position of judge and critic; he picks out the best stories of those submitted regardless of from where they come and totally ignorant of the source of the individual writer's plot.

True, the protection of submitted stories rests entirely upon the integrity and honesty of the studio editor, and his honesty and integrity

may be compared to the honesty of the banker whose standing and integrity are the only protection that a depositor has for his money. Placed in the position of judge and critic, the editor does not have to resort to stealth to obtain photoplay plots for his company, because his choice is large and varied, and if he cannot get in one day or one week or one month what his company desires, he has the ability to sit down and write the story himself. If he did not have this ability he could not hold his position and producers who employ such a man are just as honest as the amateur or professional writer who submits his story to them.

*Editors Play No Favorites.*

Therefore, the so-called bugaboo barrier is nothing but a thinly-veiled suspicion created unjustly in the mind of the amateur writer purely because the author who makes an assertion of either favoritism or stolen idea does so under an illusion, either unconsciously or intentionally, but whichever it may be, he is unjust and unfair to himself when he is unfair and unjust to the editor. The average studio editor has neither friends nor foes about whom he fears to tell the wholesome truth.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### MARKETING THE STORY.

THE market for photoplays, novel, swift, logical, full of action and written with technical correctness, is unlimited.

The successful scenario writer of today was the amateur of yesterday, and the amateur of today should be the successful author of tomorrow. Why? Because, since photoplay writing has become an *art*, treatises have been written, editorial comment made, suggestions given by directors, helps by well-known writers; in short, so many things have been done to enlighten the new writer that the mistakes of the amateurs of last year should be but steps for those climbing now.

Every studio in the country is swamped with scenarios. But of what kind? Not the salable sort. Some, of course, are being purchased, but it is only the story of *merit*. One studio director told the author that over ninety-five per cent. of the scripts received were utterly useless, because they were hackneyed stories, written hurriedly; mostly without thought of dramatic action or strength, many simply sent in because the writer *thought* it was a good story. No wonder amateurs are dissatisfied! But it is their own fault. They lack the ability to write



a good story, or they are careless. Which is it? Someone is selling stories. New writers whose plays are being accepted have found plays—but they are good plays. Nothing further can be said—*good plays* are the only ones wanted.

*Keeping Track of Ideas.*

The idea, the essential part of the story, should be jotted down immediately it enters one's mind; then add to and enlarge upon it until the plot is sufficiently fixed in the mind to allow it to be written out. The first thought is the real beginning and ending, but the spreading out and explaining and connecting it with the entire theme of the picture are as necessary to the completion and fitness of the plot as is the idea itself.

Will the price now paid for picture stories ever be raised? That's the question puzzling a number of writers. Yes, the remuneration will be increased, but not until producers *have to do so*, and that will be when the photoplaywrights themselves produce a *higher* class of picture stories. A director said recently that his own force were turning out ninety-five per cent. of the filmed stories of his company, because the outside scripts were not of sufficient strength to warrant purchase. Though fifteen and twenty-five dollars is not enough for a really good plot, many plots submitted are not worth more than those prices, according to the editors—and they should be capable of judging.

There may be a standard of price maintained by some companies above which they refuse to go, but the time is coming when, if these concerns want the *best*, they will have to pay the top price—will have to compete with the producer who is willing to pay the right price for high-grade stories. But as it is, it is up to the authors to write *superior scripts*.

### *Some Causes of Rejection*

One plain and particular defect in the manuscripts of many of the inexperienced writers is the “trusting to luck” to sell their work. However good a plot may be, if expense in production, construction, camera limitation and logic are not weighed well from the standpoint of the director, the chances are that the script will be rejected. “It is an easy matter for the editor to pick out the very bad manuscripts,” said one New York editor, “but the ‘near good’ ones require time and study.” There is the whole thing in a nutshell. One should take pains to write a play so as to enable the editor to determine in the shortest possible time whether it is available or not.

Editors are not infallible, and directors may view a story from an entirely different point than that intended to be conveyed by the author. It is wise to submit a *good* story to at least a dozen companies. It may be unavailable to one producer and acceptable to another. Keep them going the rounds.

*The Studio Editor's Ability.*

Maybe some aspiring young authors and writers do not think that pictureplay editors are capable of noticing grammatical errors, and that split infinitives, sentences ending with prepositions and the wrong use of verbs, go by without comment. Well, they are mistaken. There is hardly a studio editor holding down his desk today but has held editorial positions on up-to-date newspapers or magazines, or has had sufficient schooling to be capable of holding such a position. And coupled with the necessary ability of the editor is that dramatic talent that makes him all the more capable.

So all such errors of inexperienced writers are noticed. And how much better the impression the manuscript would make upon the editor if it were as nearly grammatical as it were possible to make it.

*Plots and Grammar.*

One might say: "But it is the *play*, the *plot*, that the editor is to consider, not my grammar." True, but apply that same argument to a magazine story, and how long would the author's ambitions last before his name would be recognized on the envelope and his MSS. returned, marked "Not available?" Of course, it is *the plot* that one is selling to the picture studio. But help the editor to learn that, whether the plot be strong or weak, it is written by one who is intelligent enough to know that good

grammar is not to be overlooked. The editor will appreciate it.

*What Not To Do.*

Don't explain your script to the editor by note or letter; don't use people's actual names if a plot is suggested through some home town incident; don't make the synopsis longer than the scenes following; don't tell the editor how hard you have worked; consider him and his work in your interest; leave your story to his judgment; abide by what his rejection slip says and don't be egotistical, but re-write your story until it sells—until it's *good enough to sell*.

Some stories never will sell. Some are rejected by one company because the company is not buying that kind at the time. Rejection does not mean that the story has no merit. It may sell to the next producer. Some plays lack sufficient dramatic action, and are returned. A play with a new idea or plot generally sells. Hackneyed themes are quickly noticeable in the studio.

*The Copyright Privilege.*

Long-hand scripts stand poor chance of consideration, because of the fact that an editor does not have time to decipher the hieroglyphics of the writers. Typewritten stories look much better and are easy to read.

Always keep a carbon copy of your scenario, and if you have received no word from the

studio within six weeks, write and inquire about it. Few stories are lost by the producers, but it does occasionally happen; and yet the author knows of no case where they failed to recompense the author.

No one has the right to write a scenario from a copyrighted book or a short story in a magazine. Neither is it fair for a writer to evolve his idea from copyrighted material, regardless of the fact that some screen productions appear to have been thus originated. As to adaptations, all the producers have staff writers to handle this class of work. If one is particularly interested in some magazine story, and desirous of putting it into scenario form, the author's consent should be obtained. There is good material yet to be found—in the street, the home, on the rivers, in the country, at a dance, in the hospitals, beside the sea, in the parks, here and there—*everywhere*—suggestions come from the most unexpected places and opportunities are at every writer's side, waiting to be picked up.

### *Keeping Down the Cost.*

One of the greatest mistakes made by picture plot writers is that of sending out a manuscript as soon as finished to the first film company whose name and address comes first to the writer's mind, regardless of whether the play is adaptable to the requirements of that particular producer. So much time and postage can be saved by submitting a story to the

concern which can produce just that kind of a play, that writers should always consider the play and producer together. Another mistake of which many writers are unconscious is that of creating situations in a play that would cost more to stage than the plot is worth. The relation between the *setting* and the *value of the plot* is an important factor.

When a company buys a story it does not agree to produce it. It may be produced at once, perhaps in a year, maybe never. Every company has hundreds of stories, bought and paid for, which will never be produced. But why worry, if one is paid for the play? Of course, there's pride in seeing one's play on the screen, but, commercially, the money counts first.

### *Cooperate with Others.*

Good thoughts, bright ideas and originality come when the mind is in that mood to act the thought, create the idea and foster the originality, and to *write well* one must *think well*. Writing is a habit that improves like old wine. To increase one's writing power and the art of story-writing imagination, seek the company of those writers and thinkers who will assist in the development of picturizing and visualizing as they apply to picture play creation. If there are any photoplaywrights in your town or city, try to meet them, get together; one can always learn from another. A writer with unlimited ambition can learn to write well. As

to new writers, remember what Emerson said of "that lump of bashfulness and phlegm!" "He developed to a point where he knew how to speak to his contemporaries." So many a writer develops in scenario writing. If you write photoplays, *write them well*.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### CENSORSHIP

**T**HE author who writes a story in which crime, or the commission of crime, may be an element does not stand the same chance as the writer who can write without calling for censorship. Just as there are magazine and book writers who can turn out clean stories, so there are photoplaywrights who are never bothered by censorship. And the kind of plays demanded by the reliable film companies are those which need no censoring. Most of the sensational, melodramatic, suggestive and plays with criminal or immoral tendencies are filmed by foreign concerns or by companies that come and go within a few weeks in our own country. Very seldom is there an immoral picture put out by a reputable American producer. True, some city censors cut out certain scenes, police eliminate what they think is wrong and the so-called reformers often attempt to dictate what should be and what should not be shown, but, as a rule, American producers and writers turn out stories than can offend none.

Crime for crime's sake is not desired. Where a moral can be pointed out and an effect given by the use of certain ideas, acts not



otherwise condoned, it is permissible. The National Board of Censorship, New York City, will furnish writers with a list of tabooed subjects, and other literature, which, if studied, will guide the photoplaywright in just what to write and what not to write.

### *Covering Crime Situations.*

The new writer must learn, as the old one has, how to "cover" an act of crime in a story to "get it over." *Cut-backs* are effectively brought into use in stories of this character, and the thought or suggestion, *without the real act*, of crime is made just as strong and powerful as if the act had been permitted to have been committed.

One must remember that of the people attending the moving picture theater, hundreds of thousands are women and children and nothing should be written into a story that a child or a good woman should not see, and if the author follows this out, he need never fear the censoring of his stories when produced and exhibited before the critical city censors and reformers of today. Crime, debauchery, robbery and the like acts are not in the least elevating. How much better is the sweet love story that tells of devotion, kindness, purity and trial? In the smoothest and sweetest love story ever written, there can be plot without resorting to crime. So the new writer should look ahead and think out clean, interesting subjects for his plays,

rather than to grasp the suggestive or criminal idea just because it has the immediate touch of complication, life and action.

### *The Morals of Stories.*

The amateur writer will find fault with "The Blot on the 'Scutcheon," but that is a classic and allowable by the board of censors. "The Merchant of Venice," "Macbeth" and other tragedies of the old masters can be filmed without hesitation, but there is a moral in them all, and the depiction is such that the audience knows they were written by master hands. But one should notice, too, that such stories *only suggest or tell of* crime and tragedy, they *do not exploit it*.

Objectionable subjects are not wanted. Questionable ideas are barred. The studio has a standard, and the writer should have one. Plays of an irreligious nature, stories of race prejudice, relating to the deformities of people; drinking, wife-abusing husbands, plain robberies without a moral; shooting and stabbing with but the action of the crime, without bringing about a moral result, are not desired by any first-class studio. The vivid exploitation of crime is never as heart-interesting, nor has it the suspense that the mere suggestion or telling of it has.

### *Permissible Stories.*

War stories, Indian plays and the like are not classed as questionable subjects because of

their calling for shooting and killing, for they are stories of truth, of fact and action, consistent and logical, and behind them there is always some element brought about to show a just cause, which teaches a lesson. In fiction, the author can awaken the interest, arouse the passion and stir the emotion by suggestion and by writing the words of his characters, but in a photoplay action and pictures speak louder than words, for they *show and exploit* where the book or written story only *tell* it. The mind and eye work fast when a picture is before them. The eye is quick to perceive and the mind to conceive when a picture of realism is flashed on the screen, while in a book it may take some time to unravel the thought presented.

Write only that which does not need censoring, and there will be no uneasiness felt on the part of the author when his play reaches the studio.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### TRAINING THE MIND TO PLOT.

**T**HE author has often said that photoplaywrights are made, not born, but there is that indispensable avenue of training that the unborn photoplaywright must traverse. And whether he remains the unrecognized writer or becomes the heralded professional depends entirely upon his own ability to so train his mind action to plot-making that his success lies purely within him. Success is not a gift of nature, but the result of thought, aspiration and ambition and the lack of training may be the utter failure of many photoplaywrights. Rhetoric and plays are not synonymous, but if one desires to master the former sufficient study will accomplish it. If he wants to conceive picture-play plot punches he must liven his imagination and coax his brain to originate that which will help him, through training, to build up character, to create plot and produce climaxes. Nothing else but training will do it and training can be procured only through experience and study. A college education is even of benefit to the cigar clerk; the same logic applies to photoplay writing. Study and practice, which mean training, lead to success—nothing else can take their place. Experience and a practical

knowledge of photoplay writing cannot be acquired in one night, one week or one month.

*Standards of Success.*

Successful picture-play writing is purely exemplified commercialism, and while many may write because of inspiration, the majority do it because of the monetary result. The mediocre writer measures his success by his own standard, instead of living up to the requirements of the producer.

Get a plot brain, if you want to succeed in photoplay writing. It requires a mind atuned to scale and melody to become professional in music; it takes one with a brain adapted to mechanics to put an intricate piece of machinery together, and it needs the intellect of a philosopher to beautifully explain the revealing power of nature and to classify the processes of ever-complexing time; and it necessitates a mind and brain of diplomatic wisdom to guide the destinies of a nation. In every one of these, and in hundreds of others, the germ of what the individual *desired to do* was planted in the mind, it was coaxed to a growth, where it sent out its branches, sipping in the knowledge and learning *what it had to have* for its further development—success. So it is in writing plots for moving picture stories—the mind *must be made to grow* in that direction—to *plot*.

Plotless plays are like brass links in a gold chain—worthless.

*Conditions of Writing.*

Training the mind to plot is not an easy thing to do, neither is it a difficult one. The joy of originality will always be the keenest when shown on the screen.

The railroad gate tender earns a gate tender's wages; an attorney measures his fees by his success, and the street cleaner rarely advances above his position, seldom is granted an increase in his pay, and whether it was instinct, desire or circumstance that put these persons in these positions, it rests entirely with them how long they remain there and how long before they increase their salary-earning power by applying learning to their vocations. They succeed only as their ambition and desire will carry them; so the scenario writer rises and improves as he studies and acquires—trains his mind to plot.

Think! think! think!

*Creating a Weak Plot.*

But what is plot-making? A man passes idly by. There is nothing in his appearance to denote the semblance of a plot, is there? But somehow he walks slowly, head bowed; he stops, as if in deep thought, occasionally. Let us analyze him. Let us *guess*, if you please, of what he is thinking. It's impossible to connect his thought with ours. Maybe we can concoct, in our mind, a story like this: The man is brooding of a past indiscreet move. Married, as a

joke he answered a matrimonial advertisement that led to his wife becoming aware of his letters to a woman in a distant city. The woman with whom he corresponded was also married. (See how we are weaving in complication?) She ran away from her husband—to be near her “affinity.” But the man, unable to stand the publicity the story brought him, ran away—from both women. And the story is ended.

Any *plot* there? Absolutely none.

Let us *put* plot into it.

### *Strengthening the Plot.*

The same man answers the same advertisement. To complicate it at the beginning, the woman with whom he corresponded lived abroad. They kept up the correspondence—both married, remember! Neither ever expected to meet the other. But fate! What things she arranges in her own way! Neither *knew the other was married*. The woman’s husband finds one of the letters from the other man. He confides in a friend, Henry Brown, and Brown tells him there must be some mistake. Under peculiar circumstances, the husband is taken suddenly ill—and dies. Remembering the letter, Brown is somewhat suspicious, now, of the young widow’s moves. But he has no proof. Catch the interest! The widow is taken ill, also; she urges her father to send for the man in America—she *must see him*—she has grown *to love him*. The doctors give her up, and the

father cables for the man to come—the woman is dying. What a situation! He never expected it. But he *goes*. How he leaves his wife is a further complication, but he visits the dying woman—who *insists on his marrying her*. Her father implores. What does he do? What should he do—the man? For *plot's* sake, he *marries her*—believing *she will die* within a few days.

*The Plot at Its Height.*

But she *revives, recovers—lives*. Then what? The plot is at its height. We never thought, when we saw the man walking along the street, that *this* is what it would lead to, did we? But we have *trained our minds to plot*. Then what? We cannot leave these characters here, undecided, and the plot not ended. It's a *crisis*—a *climax*, in the lives of our mind's molded men and women, and having got them *into* this situation, we must get them *out*. Henry Brown again appears. He has been *investigating*. What has he to reveal? We are nervous now; the suspense is terrific, for we know, somehow, that this man holds the key—what will be the outcome? We are anxious. He has discovered *who* the widow wedded—and he will expose him! Or *shall* he expose him? It's a peculiar situation, a complication. Brown cannot go farther. Why? Let us say, again for plot's sake, that in his investigation he has found that the man who married his friend's widow *is his own sister's husband*. Publicity will ruin



his own career, blight the lives of his sister and her children and perhaps kill the woman who has just become a bride again. Only *Brown knows the truth*. He has been an innocent party to the love intrigue.

*Denouement in the Plot.*

But a message comes of a terrible cyclonic storm in America. Among the dead is the family of the man who answered the matrimonial advertisement. Brown breathes a sigh of relief. A circumstance has brought us an ending we had been unable to create ourselves—but it ended happily—the way we wanted it to end, because we found, in creating our situations, building and molding our characters, that the ultimate end of the unhappy husband, made so through circumstances over which he has no voice, and of the unhappy woman in the same position on the other side, was the uniting of the two real lovers—who may “live happily ever after.”

We could train our mind to work out a better plot, but we have taken from the character of one man and by imagination procured sufficient plot material *to make a story*. Had we to do it again we could find other situations, evolve different ideas, arrange various crises, put other color into the action and in all make a different story, but it would have been *training our minds to plot just the same*.

Plot training makes the writer more familiar

with the power of his own mind to create characters, build up situations and to originate. Characters become impressed upon the mind, action is enlivened, color and "high lights" become more effective, visualization is keener and the desire to write real plots is all the more responsive to the muses.

Train the mind to plot by *thinking out plots*.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### A TALK WITH THE READER.

THERE isn't a studio editor or a professional scenario writer who would not like to have a heart-to-heart talk with every would-be plot maker and aspiring photoplaywright, but it is impossible. And the editors and staff writers have no time to devote to answering letters, many of them touchingly appealing, some of them sympathetic, that come in every mail from amateur writers scattered throughout the universe. The editors and staff writers have mastered scenario writing by close application to the work and by experience, because they undertook it as a medium for increasing their revenue—went at it with *intention*, not merely *attention*. The new writer must attack in the same manner, with the same determination. Hence this *talk* between author and reader.

The photoplay-scenario field is bigger and broader today than ever before; there are more stories released, and naturally more stories purchased and produced. With the exception of a few regular staff writers, the field for amateur writers has become exceedingly *bright*. But the writer who comes today and leaves tomorrow will never be successful at

scenario writing, because it takes time and patience not only to acquire the technique required by the producers, but in order to produce a plot with heart interest, a story with *touch* and a tale with *action*.

*Plots Abound Everywhere.*

All the studios combined probably reject 700 to 1,000 scripts per day. It is not impossible for a first-class studio to keep up with the number of scripts submitted, but it is a hard matter for that particular studio to keep up with the *demand* of photoplay productions, and in this they must necessarily turn to the magazine writer and the experienced photoplay author for the stories to be used in these productions, because the greater per cent. of the work of the amateur writer cannot be used.

The work required in scenario writing is no harder today than it was five years ago. There are just as many plots being suggested by every-day incidents, which are chronicled from coast to coast in newspaper items; there are just as many suggestions arising from remarks; there are just as many incidents of by-play in street action daily, and there are just as many coincidences coming to light; there is just as much *chance* revealed and there are just as strong plots originated as ever before, but it is simply up to the amateur writers to grasp these ideas, thoughts and suggestions and put them into salable scenario shape. But in writ-

ing them into photoplays, they must be full of action, and by action is not meant chases and incidents; by action is meant a logical story in which art is combined with heart interest, plot, complication, climax and anti-climax; a story that is clear and consistent; a story teeming with the proper atmosphere, touched with the proper amount of suspense, and with a continuity about it that carries the story smoothly to a successful conclusion.

### *Blending the "Colors."*

One error many writers make is that they attempt to work too fast. An idea comes quickly, but the building up of the plot takes time. Keep in mind the fact that an artist paints his masterpiece by taking time to watch his subject and to blend the colors. Many scenario writers will never write a masterpiece, but they may write acceptable, profit-returning stories that will add materially to their finances and to their talent—because every story sold enhances the imagination, power and desire of the writer to do better next time.

### *The Making of An Author.*

"I have not yet painted a masterpiece," an aged Italian artist said to the author one day, "because I take so much care and pains in painting less valuable ones. I like the cheaper-priced ones," he continued, "because I sell so many more. And I'm careful, *very careful*,

in the blending of the colors, with the stroke of the brushes and with detail and effect." The author did a little visualizing, and closing his eyes, pictured the many amateur scenario writers, who, in their haste to get their effort to the studio, forget to be careful in the *blending* of their word and action building. Maybe, some time, they will aspire to write a masterpiece for the films, and will reap the reward of their carelessness. The power of action-making, plot-finding, picturization and of construction can be strengthened if one works *studio fallente labore*. Authors are made, if any degree of ability is discovered. *Prodent auctorem vires*. The old artist spent nearly two weeks on a picture which he sold for thirty-five dollars. Most scenario writers would attempt to write several twenty-five dollar stories in less than two weeks—this reference is to new writers; but the author doubts if the smoothness, the sustained interest and heart touch would be there, for while the artist handled his brushes with an eye to correctness and sublime delicacy, the average amateur author rambles through a plot, content to end the visualization at almost any point, content to say, "*voila tout*." But that should not be all. Professional script writers can write strong, virile, dramatic stories with great rapidity on demand, but until the average amateur can be classed among the professionals it is better to pattern

after the old artist, and take time to "*blend the colors.*"

*Keep Everlastingly at It.*

From the ranks of the amateur photoplaywrights come the professionals. It is the same in magazine writing, painting, sculpture, teaching, editing, music—and even baseball. The amateur writer stands on an equal basis with the professional, as far as origination and plot are concerned, and so far as any favoritism might be suggested, the amateur writer should be capable of turning into the studio just as strong a plot, just as good an idea as that submitted by the regular staff writer. And the only advantage the professional has, probably, over the amateur, is that he has overcome the weaknesses and defects generally found in scenarios of the amateur. If an amateur writer has a good strong plot, has a vivid imagination capable of turning out the kind of stories the studios are demanding—and they are demanding more and more—then the amateur writer should get in touch with some institution, critic or editor that he may be aided in overcoming the defects of his technique and learn the power of proper photo-plot construction.

Keep everlasting at it. Conquer—that's the word—*conquer*. But to win—to conquer, be sure to have the ideas that are new, that will sell. "*The Paganini of Politics*," Benjamin Disraeli, the great English statesman who forced his way into Parliamentary power,

a thinker and doer of things who was not dismayed at failure, who did not allow the mocking applause of a tittering assemblage to shatter his great ideals, and who shouted to a howling Parliament: "I will sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear from me!" (and it did come) reminds one of the struggling author who faces rejection slips with a determination that better things will come, *must* come; who works with a zeal akin to success, who stops wishing for success, because a wish is a confession of weakness, and who wins in the end because of his constantly improving vision of photoplay work and its requirements.

### *Ideas Result in Plots.*

What makes a successful writer of photoplays? As thought engenders thought, one idea evolves another. The mind and imagination are like a well and its windlass. Train the mind to *think* of a plot, and the imagination will triple its working power. The more one drinks from the well of thought, the clearer becomes the vision, and as the imagination strengthens, the visualization so vital in scenario writing becomes more apparent and forceful. Begin on an original dramatic thought, write and re-write it. and one will never know his own capabilities for thought-action until the finale of a worth-while plot is ready for the editor. Thought creates thought, idea develops action and action tends to show the way to the



climax. The polishing or finishing—the climax—will come as the anti-climax and crises present themselves as the plot is unraveled. But it takes perseverance.

The average new writer does not give sufficient conscientious thought to the work. Scenario writing is not to be entered into as one enters a circus—expecting fun and excitement. Scenario writing is an *art*, and any art to be made to pay must be looked upon as such.

*Write Only the Best.*

“*Don’t be classed with the writers born for the benefit of waste-basket makers.*” Did you, amateur author, ever think what brains you were wasting, what paper you were throwing away, what time you were spending, what postage you were paying, in writing unavailable moving picture plays? Did you ever stop to analyze your reasons for writing scenarios? Did you ever consider whether you were capable of originating a drama or whether you were better qualified to write comedy? All this should be considered, for scenario writing isn’t an easy thing to do. From the thousands of manuscripts handled by the author, amateur writers are assured that the advice given is for the best, it being the author’s belief that honesty and frankness are better than to say, without regard for the truth, “Any one can write a scenario.” Yes, anyone may write a scenario, But what kind?

Plot-building and scenario writing is not a commercial proposition, except wherein it applies to the author and the film manufacturer. Only one thing can be taught with any degree of success by stereotyped form, and that is technique, but the bridge would be so weak it would break down with the author before he could reach the studio with his story. If a writer's manuscript plainly indicates that he has no ability, no conception of plot-making, no idea of literary procedure, wholly lacks any element necessary to make a real author, why should that writer be led to believe that he will become successful? Every studio editor has received hundreds of unavailable scripts from the hands of writers who will never, *never* be anything else than writers made "for the benefit of waste-basket makers." And yet on the other hand, hundreds of stories have been received which have the ear-marks of the real writer, but the work was not to be classed with the purchasable list.

### *A Fascinating Work.*

Scenario writers are made, not born. They are coming from every rank in life; some of the best film dramas and comedies have been written by store clerks, others by teachers, many by newspaper men; they have come from students, pastors and housewives, from the ranches in the West and from the minds of debutantes in the East, from lumbermen in the

North and from cotton mill employes in the South. "Don't be classed with the writers born for the benefit of waste-basket makers." Write stories that will escape such fate—and that means writing stories teeming with *new plots, new ideas*.

Writing stories for photoplays is very fascinating, more so than magazine writing, for the author of a produced play knows many more thousands will see it than would read a story. It is open to many classes of writers, and the photoplay is presented to the masses and the classes, so that the author can write to reach all. The plain folk are devotees of the film theater and the rich are as eager to see the pictures as the poor.

### *Watching Your Picture-Story*

It is inexpressibly interesting to sit and watch a picture-story on the screen, knowing that you are the author. You hear your neighbor say, "Oh, what realism, what plot, what a story!" and you sit in silent amazement, too timid to say, "I wrote *that* story." You are satisfied to let it be so, though you would like some one to be just a little bit proud and say, "Here's my hand; that story helped me." You have drawn your picture, made your plot, modeled your fancies, woven in your dream-pictures of the girl who waits, or the mother who sighs, the boy who patterns after you, or of the unpleasant past and the ever-happy future—you have made your thoughts into a scenario

story and the producer and editor applied the necessary touch of the artists' brushes that bring tears to your eyes and gladness to your heart. You have written and sold a scenario—a story with sufficient merit that it has been released; you have sat and seen it, watched the characters of your mind's eye and of your heart's desire; you have seen even nature and the stars and the blue of the heavens blended into your idea—and you are glad you are *now* a scenario writer.

It's all worth while, for the one who really means to become a real scenario writer—a photoplaywright in every sense of the term.

### *Money in Scenario Writing.*

Take your plots where you find them, but reason with yourself to learn whether you are capable of writing out the story; get in touch with reputable editors and advisers, and thus save the money, time and worry that will naturally follow if you prefer the guidance of persons unqualified to advise. There is money in scenario writing, but first learn if you are one who can escape being classed with those whose work goes into waste-baskets.

Learn to *think ideas*; learn to make the imagination work, and the more one *thinks* the more one can *write*, and the more one writes the better plot-action material will be turned out.

The achievement path going toward the

photoplay studio door is as rugged as the walk to any other goal of desire; but if the author "plays fair" with his own mind and imagination, writes and re-writes, expecting victory—*success*—the studio door will swing open to him—and checks will replace rejection slips forevermore.

The rewards of the successful photoplaywright are wholesomely acceptable. Not all can become successful scenario writers. Every soldier aspires to a captaincy. Every captain wants to become a general. But what brings reward to the soldier and to the captain is faithfulness to his duty, love for his work and position and a desire to go upward—to the highest point of efficiency. That is what it means to become a professional photoplaywright—*efficiency*.

### *Plot Is What Counts.*

In it all, remember *plot* is the magnet that draws the pay-checks. *Plot without technique will sell, but technique without plot will not.* One should accompany the other. It is a combination every studio editor welcomes into the office.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### TECHNICAL STUDIO TERMS.

**ACTION**—Work, gestures and movements of players in the development of the plot.

**ADAPTATION**—A scenario written about or around a copyrighted story, poem or book.

**ATMOSPHERE**—The proper environment, etc., for photoplay production.

**BUST**—Any part of a scene magnified or enlarged.

**BY-PLAY**—Non-essential action, yet enough to keep the story moving.

**BUSINESS**—The action or movement of a character in which he does certain things.

**BREAK**—Used to “cover” crime; prevent long action.

**CLIMAX**—The end of the play or the last scene, the point at which the strongest part is enacted, the place to which all characters have worked and where the unraveled plot is plainly depicted.

**CAST**—The list of players or characters necessary in the production.

**CLOSE-UP**—See *bust*.

**CHARACTER**—A player taking part in the production.

**COMEDY**—A play with a humorous interest; funny, laughable.

- CUT-BACK**—Referring back to a particular scene to identify and hold the interest and action; to create suspense.
- CUT-IN**—Generally used to show spoken words of characters.
- CUT-IN LEADER**—A leader cut into or inserted in a scene to break or explain the action.
- CRISIS**—A decisive point of action; an important feature of a play.
- CUT**—To shorten an action, as “John comes down stage, cut.”
- CUTTING**—The dividing of a scene for the insertion of leaders, notes, “cut-in” matter, etc.
- CROSSING OVER**—When a character goes from one side to another.
- COMING DOWN**—When a character moves toward the camera or footage line.
- CONTINUITY**—A continuous, uninterrupted story.
- CONVENTIONAL**—Dry, commonplace.
- DISCOVERED**—Applies to a character when on the stage or in the scene when it opens.
- DENOUEMENT**—The climax or end of the play.
- DEVELOPMENT**—The building up of the story and dividing the action into scenes.
- DISSOLVE**—The gradual introduction or fading away of a character or a scene within a scene. Used in dream pictures and to refer to past action.
- DRAMA**—A word applied to photoplay dramatic action and to the legitimate stage.

**DETAIL**—Explanatory action.

**EXTERIOR**—A photoplay scene laid out of doors.

**ENTRANCE**—Where characters are brought into the scene.

**EXIT**—Where a character passes out of a scene.

**EXEUNT**—Where more than one character leaves the scene.

**EPISODE**—An element to be used in a plot.

**FLASH**—A few feet of film showing a note, letter, or scene.

**FARCE**—A broad form of comedy.

**FARCE COMEDY**—More polite than straight farce, yet livelier than straight comedy.

**FADE**—Dissolving one scene into another; used in explanation, dreams and to refer back.

**FORM**—Referring to a scenario being in proper form.

**HISTORICAL**—Referring to historical scenario stories.

**HUMAN INTEREST**—A heart touch in the story that awakens the emotions.

**INSERT**—Letters, newspaper clippings, notes, telegrams, etc.

**INTERIOR**—A scene laid within.

**INCIDENT**—Referring to a happening or occurrence during the action of a play.

**IDEA**—The plot or that which forms the nucleus or suggests the story.

**LEAD**—A prominent character in the play—man or woman.



**LEADER**—A written explanation or subtitle preceding a scene; used where it is impossible to give the same explanation in action.

**LOCALE**—The location at which the action takes place.

**MYSTERY**—A part of a story that hides the climax for a time and leaves the audience wondering what will happen next; used considerably in detective plays.

**MANUSCRIPT**—A copy of a scenario.

**MATERIAL**—The parts of the play which are put together in the construction of the scenario.

**MULTIPLE REEL**—Meaning more than one reel.

**MELODRAMATIC**—Bordering on sensationalism.

**MASTER PLOT**—The basis of more than one story.

**ORIGINALITY**—A plot or idea originating in the mind of the writer.

**OBJECTIVITY**—The visualization of facts, ideas and plot, expressed or visualized by physical means.

**PADDING**—Putting in unnecessary action to bring a story up to a full reel length.

**PANTOMIME**—The art of suggesting and telling with action only—no dialogue.

**PANORAM**—Moving the camera up and down, from side to side, to follow the action of the scene.

**PLOT**—The theme or motive of a story.

**PUNCH**—Any action that will heighten the suspense—the supreme test of a play.

**PRODUCTION**—A completed play.

- PHOTOPLAYWRIGHT**—A scenario author.
- RECONSTRUCTION**—Meaning the revision of a story to satisfy the studio requirements.
- REVISION**—Same as reconstruction.
- REVAMP**—Same as revision.
- REGISTER**—To register an effect of action or to show by expression, hatred, sympathy, love, disgust, etc.
- SCENARIO**—A skeleton of the play.
- SPLIT REEL**—More than one subject on 1,000-foot reel.
- SUB-TITLE**—Same as leader. (Leader preferred.)
- SYNOPSIS**—A brief story of the play—just enough to give the editor a sufficient idea of what the plot consists.
- SCENE**—The action which takes place in one spot where the camera is not moved.
- SCENE PLOT**—A list of the various scenes or settings. (Not necessary to accompany scenario.)
- SEQUENCE**—Means directness or a smoothly-running story, with one line of development.
- SUBJECT**—A term for the photoplay as a comedy subject, dramatic subject, etc.
- SUSPENSE**—An action or a part of "business" that arouses the interest of the spectators.
- THEME**—The trend of the plot; the idea of the plot.
- TRAGEDY**—A deep drama.

**TINT**—Used to denote or suggest moonlight, night, firelight, etc., etc.

**TIME**—The number of minutes it takes to “run off” a play.

**TECHNIQUE**—The form of construction for a photoplay.

**UNEXPECTEDNESS**—An unlooked-for turn or surprise in a story.

**UNITY**—The arrangement of a story and its parts to effect harmony, peace, time and action.

**VISION**—A small scene shown as a part of a full scene; generally used and introduced in the upper right-hand or left-hand corner.

**VISUALIZATION**—Seeing or having a “picture eye;” to see the action of the play as it should be written and produced.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

#### SYNOPSIS.

**Why do companies prefer short synopsis?**

*Because a story can be told in a short one, 250 to 300 words; less detail to analyze, and because a condensed script-synopsis shows the writer's ability to comply with studio requirements.*

**Is it all right to submit only the synopsis, or should the full scenario be sent in?**

*Submit complete story always. There are but few companies asking for synopsis only, and for those concerns a special synopsis can be prepared.*

**Do studios want both prologue and synopsis, or is there any objection to both being submitted?**

*A short, self-explanatory synopsis is sufficient for most stories, but a brief prologue to a certain class of plays will not be unappreciated.*

**Is 400 to 600 words too many for a one-reel story?**

*Yes, decidedly so. For the company that desires synopsis only, this would be all right, but ordinarily a one-reel story-synopsis can be given in 250 words.*

**What is meant by explanatory synopsis?**

*Just what the word implies. Scene-action cannot be given in a synopsis, but the plot of the story can and must be—just enough to explain to the editor what the story is about, the characters involved, etc.*

**In writing a synopsis for a one-reel scenario, should this be on the first page, with the cast, or on a separate page?**

*It should be on the first page, with cast preceding and scene-plot following.*

**Should all the characters of the story be mentioned in the synopsis?**

*Yes, all the important ones—leads and others having a direct part in the plot.*

Should the writer, in his synopsis, always refer to his characters by their first names; is it all right to call Brand by that name one place and James another?

*Use characters' last names. Never use first and second, it is confusing; never have two characters with the first names the same if it can be avoided.*

Should the synopsis be typed double space or single?

*Single space, with several spaces between cast and synopsis and between synopsis and scene-plot, if one be used.*

### SCENES.

In a scene where a newspaper clipping is used, is the scene made as one scene or two?

*It is one scene, but when an insert is used, then the words BACK TO SCENE are written to show the continuance of the scene.*

Where a scene is an exterior and a plainer view of a certain part of it is desired, how should it be written in the scene?

*This may be done by calling for a BUST, which means ANOTHER scene, because the camera has been moved UP CLOSE to take it. Then when you refer back to the original distance picture, write SAME AS IN SCENE SO AND SO.*

Could a comedy be written in ten or twelve scenes?

*No. A drama could be written in a few scenes, but comedy moves faster and requires more scenes. Generally, comedy will run over forty scenes and farce-comedy upwards of seventy-five, although both depend on the character and nature of the story as to the number.*

How many scenes would a three-reel story require?

*This must be measured the same as a one-reel subject, the number of scenes depending entirely upon the character of the story. Only experience will show how many scenes are required.*

Should LEADERS precede a scene or BREAK into it?

*Both. A LEADER precedes the scene and a CUT-IN LEADER is inserted into the scene.*

Would it be wise to submit the scenes of action to a studio, with a letter telling of the plot?

*No. If the scenes can be properly written, so can the synopsis that should accompany them.*

**In a scene is it necessary to detail what furniture should be used, and just what the characters are supposed to say?**

*No. The director will furnish the SETTING and furniture to correspond with the story. Actions take the place of words, so write ACTION ONLY—minute, condensed. Don't give color of portieres, style of furniture, kind of curtains, carpets, etc., etc. Don't say PARLOR, LAVISHLY AND BEAUTIFULLY FURNISHED, RICH RUGS ON FLOOR, etc., etc.*

**What is a scene perspective?**

*A scene showing a street in the distance or seen far away.*

**What is meant by scenes not being properly divided?**

*Where two scenes are written as one, as some amateurs are apt to do. Each time the camera MOVES, there MUST be a different scene. For instance, an exterior, showing front porch of house. That is one scene. The next may show the rear, which is ANOTHER scene; but some writers fail to see that the camera MUST BE MOVED to take such scenes, and they are written as one. Then, there is the improper division of a scene wherein an insert is used. Inserts should be placed IN the scene where the REGISTRATION is needed.*

**How do you write a scene where one wants to show what a character is doing, where he had been left in a previous scene—to identify him with the running story?**

*Write BACK TO SCENE SO AND SO, FRANK SEARCHING BOOK FOR NOTE, ETC.*

**What is the definition of a scene?**

*A scene is all of the action of a play that is taken in the same spot at one time without moving the camera.*

### MISCELLANEOUS.

**What is a split-reel comedy?**

*A story of 500 or 750 feet of film on a 1,000-foot reel, and on which there is another subject, generally an educational or industrial picture, or, at times, another short comedy.*

**What does the word BUSINESS mean in a scenario?**

*It refers to the action of the players. For instance, a player or two lowering a boat, climbing a ladder, searching a safe, etc., etc.*

**How can one scene be MATCHED with another?**

*This is planning the action at the end of one scene to correspond to that at the opening of another, as the following: Bessie exits to Scene 20—Interior, parlor. Bessie enters, etc., etc.*

**Can a quoted Leader or SUB-TITLE precede a scene or should it be used as a CUT-IN?**

*It may be used both ways, but as a CUT-IN preferred.*

**What size and grade of paper should be used for scenarios and where should name and address be placed?**

*Use a good grade of paper, 8½x11, and write name and address in the upper left-hand corner on first and second pages and in lower left-hand corner on the last page.*

**Where one can think of lots of plots, but is unable to put them into proper form, what should be done?**

*Either learn the technique or give the plots to a capable writer who will collaborate in the work.*

**How long does a studio keep a scenario?**

*It all depends to which company it is submitted and the value of the story. The longer a script is held by a reliable company, the more likely it is to be purchased. Never inquire concerning a story until it has been held five or six weeks.*

**What is the difference between a SUB-TITLE and a LEADER?**

*No difference, it is a matter of preference.*

**What should be included in an insert or, rather, what does it cover?**

*Letters, notes, telegram, newspaper clippings, etc., etc.*

**What is meant by the word BREAK?**

*This is used to interrupt a scene where the action is too long or of a forbidden nature. CUT-BACKS are used to BREAK a scene of this sort.*

**What is meant by the word TINT and how should it be used?**

*TINT is a term used to denote night, moonlight, etc., etc.*

**What is a scene plot?**

*The listing of the various scenes, showing locations, etc.*

**When one wants to show an enlarged picture of a photograph, held in the hand of a player, how should it be written?**

*Simply write BUST OF PHOTO IN GRACE'S HAND, ETC.*

**What is the average price of scenarios?**

*For amateur work, \$10 to \$25. Any reliable company will pay just according to the value and merit of the story. Some writers never get less than \$25 for a story and many no less than \$40 and upwards.*

**Should all the principal characters be introduced in the first scene?**

*Not necessarily in the first one, but during the first few.*

**Is there any objection to taking plots from the Bible?**

*None whatever, provided such theme has not been done before. The Bible is a store-house of thoughts, suggestions and ideas for photoplays.*

**Is it all right to take a plot from a newspaper item?**

*Yes, but one should remember that hundreds of others have seen the same item and cross currents of similarity are likely to result. In this, the author should take the IDEA only, then work an entirely different story out of it.*

**How can one find an appropriate title for a story?**

*Titles, like newspaper heads, should be written from the MEAT OF THE STORY—to cover the theme in a very brief way.*

**Will studios read scenarios taken from Shakespeare and other writers' work?**

*Not generally, as such are classed as adaptations and written by staff writers.*

**Is BUST or CLOSE-UP a part of a scene or a separate scene?**

*A separate scene.*

**How can one COVER crime in a story?**

*By the use of CUT-BACKS, etc., etc.*

**When a scenario is written by two persons, may both their names appear on the script and will the producer use both names on the screen in crediting the authorship?**

*Yes, to both questions. But only ONE address should be written on the manuscript.*



Which is the better way to send a story, with self-addressed, stamped envelope or enclose stamps for its return?

*Send self-addressed, stamped envelope ALWAYS.*

Do the words ON and DISCOVERED mean the same thing?

*Yes.*

What does an editor mean when he marks a story TOO CONVENTIONAL?

*That the story is too dry and commonplace; lacks life and action.*

Will the work of an amateur be considered as seriously in the studio as that of a professional?

*Yes. All producers are looking for new material, new writers who can give them what they want. But the amateurs' stories must be original and worthy of consideration.*

Must an author get permission from the publisher of an accepted story if he desires to put it into scenario form?

*Yes, always.*

What is the average number of characters a story should have?

*It depends upon the character of the story. Three to five are, as a rule, sufficient. The less number the more easy the story and plot are to follow.*

May a story be written and submitted where it is from one's personal experiences?

*Yes, provided it contains enough PLOT and merit.*

In writing a scenario from a local incident, is it all right to use the people's real names?

*No, never use the proper names of characters taken from real life. There are several reasons, the main one being the likelihood of creating enmity.*

Is it absolutely necessary that scenarios be typewritten when submitted to the studio?

*Yes, absolutely necessary.*

May more than one story at a time be submitted to a company?

*Yes, but always send separate, self-addressed, stamped envelope for each story.*

Should one use his own name or a nom-de-plume?

*This rests entirely with the author.*

**In writing a story to fit some certain player, should it be sent to that player or to the company?**

*Send to the company, with note reading: WRITTEN ESPECIALLY FOR YOUR MR. JOHNSON.*

**Can a story end with a LEADER?**

*Yes, but it is seldom done, and not recommended.*

**When a story is rejected by five or six companies, does that stamp it as unavailable?**

*Not necessarily so. A good story should be submitted to at least a dozen companies. One must remember that the particular studio to which a story may be submitted may not be in the market for that particular kind of play at that time.*

**In selecting a title, is it better to make it brief or to use one of several words?**

*The briefer the better. "The Last Hope" is more preferable than "The Disappointment of Ralph Dunne."*

**What sort of themes should be avoided in writing a scenario?**

*Crime, suggestive, robbery, kidnapping, drinking, debauchery, sensational, white slavery, etc., etc.*

**What class of stories are the best sellers?**

*Good, clean American drama and comedy.*

**Is the climax the strong part of the story?**

*Yes, very—the point that leaves its impression on the audience, the place to get in the punch, even after there have been punches in the preceding crises.*

**What is meant by denouement?**

*See question and answer above.*

# **NUTSHELL SCENARIO TRUTHS!**

**WHERE YOU WANT THEM  
WHEN YOU NEED THEM. A  
HANDBOOK OF PHOTOPLAY  
INFORMATION. NOT LARGE—BUT FORCEFUL.  
SCENARIO FACTS BOILED DOWN! ■ ■ ■ ■ ■**

---

## **Photoplay Helps & Hints**

*by* A. W. THOMAS

**A**UTHOR of "How To  
Write a Photoplay"  
and formerly editor-  
in-chief of the Photoplay  
Clearing House of New York  
Editor, also, of Photoplay  
Magazine and the Photo-  
play Scenario

Send 50c by postoffice or express  
money order or in 2c or 1c post-  
age stamps and get a copy of  
"Photoplay Helps and  
Hints" postpaid

*Address*

**The Photoplaywrights' Association  
of America  
Chicago, Ill.**

# *The Motion Picture Story*

by WILLIAM LORD WRIGHT



TEXT-BOOK of the most dependable information and instruction relative to the details of workmanship required in writing scenarios.

¶ Mr. Wright is one of the pioneers of the photoplay field and was the first author to prepare a volume on photoplay writing.

¶ As Photoplay Editor of The Dramatic Mirror, his work has been widely known.

¶ Your photoplay library is not complete without a copy of Mr. Wright's "The Motion Picture Story."

¶ This substantially-bound, instructive volume will be sent to you prepaid on receipt of \$1.80. Remit by postoffice or express money order or bank draft.

*Address*

**The Photoplaywrights' Association  
of America  
Chicago, Ill.**













D	AISLE	SECT	SHLF	SIDE	POS	ITEM	C
8	04	14	26	7	06	004	0